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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA - FORMATIVE EDUCATIONAL CONCERNS

by

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A THESIS

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Indian Association of Alberta - Formative Educational Concerns" submitted by Keith Johnson in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Education.

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Supervisor

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Date September 1, 1977.

DEDICATION

To the Native People of Alberta, for what they have taught, and still teach me.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to investigate and record the formative educational concerns of the Indian Association of Alberta. The study gives recognition and acknowledgement of the Association's work and achievements in the field of Indian education.

The work surveys the roots of organizational activity among western Indian groups during the twenties and thirties, and examines organizational work among Alberta Indians culminating in the official formation of the Indian Association of Alberta in the summer of 1944.

The Association's efforts to secure recognition from government, and its attempts to promote the economic welfare of Indians are given attention; in addition, the relationship between these activities and the educational situation of Indians during the early 1940's is examined. Inadequacies existing in Indian schools at this time, as outlined in the Association's Memorial to the Federal Government in 1945, are investigated and summarized. The study explores the Association's reformist role in education, its continuous influence and importance as educator among Alberta Indian groups, and its attempts to re-structure Indian education by instituting new patterns of authority for its operation.

PREFACE

I am very amused by those . . . who are always telling us: "Let us first educate the people and emancipate them." We say, on the contrary: Let them first emancipate themselves and they will look after their own education.

Michael Bakunin

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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INTRODUCTION

Purpose and Scope of the Study

The purpose of this exploratory study is to inquire into and record the formative educational concerns of the Indian Association of Alberta.[1] More specifically, the study examines the Association's work, during its first years of official formation, toward defining its main issues of concern relating to the education of Indian children in Alberta, and its communications of such concerns to federal authorities over the period 1944-1947.

The Indian Association's main concerns in education stemmed from its awareness that a critical situation of neglect existed in educational facilities for Indians in Alberta during the mid-forties. The inadequacies were the subject of the Association's Memorial to the Government of Canada in 1945,[2] and were restated during consultations between Association delegates and federal officials through

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[1]Hereafter referred to as the Indian Association, or Association.

[2]Inadequacies included: lack of school accommodation, lack of books, poorly equipped facilities in existing schools, severely limited opportunities for higher education, lack of specially trained teachers, the necessity for a large increase of day school education on the reserves, and the need for an increase in per capita grants to residential schools. Indian Association Memorial to the Government of Canada, Minister of Mines and Resources, and Officials of the Indian Affairs Branch, 1945, O.M.I. Archives, Provincial Museum, Edmonton.

the machinery of the Joint Parliamentary Commissions of the Senate and Commons appointed to investigate Indian grievances over the period 1946-1947.

Indian Education: Political and Economic Relationships

The study further demonstrates that neglect of Indian education was paralleled by serious Indian political and economic underdevelopment in Alberta during the inter-war period,[3] and that the two sets of conditions were related. These conditions, in addition to providing the impetus for organizational activity among widely dispersed Indian groups in Alberta during the twenties and thirties, subsequently proved to be the principal and governing factors influencing the Indian Association's official formation during the mid-forties, and provided the basis for its policy development.

As informants[4] have indicated, the Indian Association's early organizational activity centred around the conditions and causes of poverty and political powerlessness. Interest and concern over matters of education were to occur at later stages of the Association's growth, and centred upon attempts to effect reform within the white-dominated Indian educational system. During recent years the Association has made frequent

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[3]Diamond Jenness, "Canada's Indians Yesterday, What of Today?", Canadian Journal of Economics and Political Science 20, (February 1954): 99.

[4]Interviews with James Lapatac, Winterburn, May 1, 1974, Cyprien Larocque, Hobbema, May 28, 1974, and John Sampson, Edmonton, February 8, 1975.

attempts to re-structure the Indian educational system in Alberta, and has called for the institution of new patterns of authority for its operation.[5] Since, therefore, this study regards the basis of Indian organizational activity in Alberta since the twenties to have been essentially educational in character, especially in the area of political education, informing and educating Indian people as to their Treaty rights, their condition of wardship and subjection, and their restrictions under the terms of the Indian Act, the role and influence of the Association in Indian education can be viewed from two important perspectives. First, that of reformer in its attempts to institute changes within an educational system under dominant white control and modelled upon the white provincial pattern; and, second, that of educator among Indian groups,[6] seeking to stimulate and encourage political and social awareness, with an overall objective of maintaining and strengthening Indian cultural identity.

As indicated above, the study directs its main considerations toward the Association's reformist role in education, but it also takes careful note of its educative influence among Alberta's Indians, and makes reference to this important role of the Association in its general conclusions.

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[5]Harold Cardinal, The Unjust Society (Edmonton: M.G. Hurtig, 1969), pp. 59-61.

[6]It is stressed that the Association's educational function operates within the larger white society in equal importance, and should not be underestimated. In this sense, the white educator can be "re-educated."

Framework for the Study's Investigations

We have noted that the governing factors influencing the Indian Association's official formation were primarily economic and political in nature, and that these economic and political concerns inevitably led to its concern for education as being a principal means of emancipation from wardship and dependency.

In addition, it has been suggested that the emergence of the Indian Association during a critical period for Indian cultural survival through the twenties and thirties, and its subsequent formation and struggle for recognition during the mid-forties, can be regarded as important stages in a total educational process which has taken place among Alberta's Indians. Accordingly, the study's framework of investigation has been planned as follows:

1. Roots and Formation of the Indian Association

The study's first consideration is directed toward examining the causes and the proliferation of Indian organizational activity in western Canada during the twenties and thirties. It also takes note of the significant influence exerted by eastern Indian groups upon western Indians.[7] In addition, it examines the

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[7]White settlement in Canada had its origins in the expansion of the European nations into the western hemisphere during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The first settlements were established along the north

organizational strategies adopted among Alberta's Indian bands which culminated in the formation of the Indian Association in the summer of 1944. Significantly, in terms of the crystallization of Indian protest at this time, several provincially-based Indian organizations came into existence during the forties.

2. Political, Economic, and Educational Concerns of the Indian Association: Formative Period

The study's second consideration is given to the main political and economic concerns of the Association during its formative years, and examines the specific educational concerns and proposals for

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Atlantic seaboard: the French at Port Royal in 1605 and Quebec in 1608; the English at Jamestown in 1607; and the Dutch at New Amsterdam in 1615. Despite variations in the series of impacts and conflicts which have occurred between Amerindian and European cultures since, these first contacts have set the pattern for subsequent administrative policies and attitudes practised by whites among Canada's Indians. Study of this important historical background to Indian-white relationships lies beyond this study's scope, yet the ideological basis for the origin of reserves should be stated here, as the reserve system still has important implications for Indian education in the future. The reserve was a model of missionary strategy, outlined in Father le Jeune's Relation for 1634: a permanent mission station, to which converts could be attracted both by the consolations of religion and the protection of French power, and where they could be taught the elements of European civilization. S.R. Mealing, ed., The Jesuit Relations and Allied Documents (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1963), pp. i-xii. See also: Alfred Goldsworthy Bailey, The Conflict of European and Eastern Algonkian Cultures (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1969). Cornelius J. Jaenen, "Amerindian Views of French Culture in the Seventeenth Century," Canadian Historical Review LV 3 (September 1974): 261-291.

educational reform as outlined in its 1945 Memorial to the Government of Canada. It is noted that the 1940's witnessed heightened activity among Alberta's Indian groups to pressure the highest levels of government into awareness of Indian grievances, and to take notice of the Association's proposals and recommendations. This period also witnessed increasing demands for revision of the Indian Act, and a call to the federal government to fully recognize its obligations, under the terms of the Treaties, to provide an adequate education for Indian children. Awareness by Indians during this period of the close interrelationship between the social, economic, political, and educational aspects of life on Alberta's reserves increased as spokesmen emerged who could integrate various issues and begin to manipulate organizational techniques for protest. The Association's leadership, confronted by the continuing insensitivity of government to Indian grievances, necessarily became involved in political lobbying and enlisted the support of some M.P.'s at Ottawa.

3. Conclusion: Summary and Examination of the Association's Proposals for Educational Reform and Change

In conclusion, the study summarizes: (i) the Indian Association's attempts during its first years

to define its main issues of concern in education, and, (ii) the Association's contribution in establishing an educational system consistent with Indian values and educational philosophy.

Sources of Information

Valuable information for the study has been obtained from early members of the Indian Association. Primary sources of information were: the Minutes and Reports of the Indian Association, 1944-1956, publications and reports of the Indian Association, the John Laurie Papers, Hugh Dempsey Papers, and J.F. Dion Papers and Diary, the Minutes and Proceedings of the Catholic Indian League, Alberta Division, 1954-1965. Secondary sources of information have included: House of Commons Reports, Alberta newspaper archives, publications of the Alberta Native Communications Society, and journals and studies concerning Alberta's history since the beginning of the century.

Supplementary data has consisted of oral and written material derived from persons whose past activities qualified them as important sources of information. These included: members of the Indian Association, members of the (now defunct) Friends of the Indian Society, members of the Metis Society, and members of various Church missionary groups. In addition, members of various University faculties have rendered assistance. Publications of the Department of Indian Affairs were not used as primary sources of information for this study.

Investigations concerning the Indian Association's development took cognizance of a wide variety of events and incidents considered related to the Association's growth in Alberta over the period, 1920-1947.

Need for the Study

The writer considered the study was justified for the following reasons:

1. Recognition and Acknowledgement of the Indian Association's Work in the Field of Indian Education

Recognition of the Indian Association's work in education has been slight in the past. Findings of this study would confirm that the Association's proposals for reform in Indian education have received often summary treatment from government authorities. Cardinal, noting the long struggle by Indians to create strong organizations, writes that:

> The average Canadian is unaware of the work that has been done and is now being undertaken by Indian leaders, largely because the government has had access to the news media and the Indian people have not.[8]

2. Indian Organizations: Historical Perspectives

It is believed that the context, extent, and nature of the "new" phase into which Indians are frequently said to have emerged, can be more clearly

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[8]Cardinal, The Unjust Society, p. 97.

understood by the investigation of past organizational activities among Canada's Indians.[9] It is further maintained that the utilization of historical perspectives is fundamental towards gaining understanding and clarification of present Indian concerns in education.

3. Indian-White Relations: Mutual Understanding

Findings of this study would strongly suggest that there remains a limitation of knowledge within the larger white society concerning Indian-white relationships. One dangerous consequence of this is the tendency to view problems facing Indian people in ahistorical terms; yet another is the prolongation of misunderstanding and misinterpretation of Indian concerns by the larger society. Norman E. Wagner, noting the growing debate over Canadian Indians over recent years, writes:

> Many of the suggestions and comments offered by both whites and Indians run counter to each other. The obvious dilemma of the current controversy suggests that there is a very serious obstacle to be overcome before any real solutions can be found. The

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[9] Patterson, noting that intensive documentation of Indian protest in British Columbia provides an insight into the history of mid-twentieth century awareness for one area, observes that "similar studies in the Prairie Provinces might provide material for the establishment of a continuity of leadership and issues in those areas as well." E. Palmer Patterson II, The Canadian Indian (Collier-Macmillan Canada Ltd., 1972), pp. 145-147.

obstacle is a dearth of knowledge.[10]

4. Timeliness of the Study

The study is felt timely, in that some of the sources used would no longer be available if the work had been delayed. In addition, up to the time of writing this study, the contribution of the Indian Association's early work in Indian education in Alberta had been neither formally nor systematically recorded.

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[10]Norman E. Wagner, Introduction to The Image of the Indian by Ronald G. Haycock, (Waterloo, Ontario: Lutheran University, 1971), p. ii.

CHAPTER I

ROOTS OF FORMATION

This chapter proposes to survey Indian organizational activity and growth outside of Alberta during the inter-wars period (1918/39). It will also demonstrate that such organizational growth was characterized by a continuity of leadership and issues. In addition, it will investigate how organizational activity among Alberta's Indian bands over the same period, (which culminated in the formal organization of the Indian Association in the early 1940's), was strongly influenced by, and closely related with, continuous attempts by Indian leaders outside of Alberta to establish both provincewide and nationwide Indian organizations.

In terms of the educational focus of this study, it is maintained that the varying techniques[1] employed by Indian leaders toward the creation of effective and viable organizations among often widely dispersed and isolated Indian groups were essentially educational in nature. This educational "process" (characterized by a strong emphasis toward enlightenment and conscientization) became

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[1]Organizational techniques would include: building, informing, educating membership; perceiving, analysing, defining, integrating areas of concern; extending, developing communications; learning media vocabulary and method, of white society; establishing unity inter-tribally; offering practical solutions to problems; raising funds, etc.

significantly related to the growth and development of the Indian Association, and its increasing interest and concern in Indian education over recent years.[2]

Heightened organizational activity took place among Canadian Indians during the post-war years following World War I. In the West, British Columbia Indians, with the longest history of attempts at organizing among Canadian Indian groups,[3] became particularly active during the 1920's and 1930's. Their land claims issue led to the crystallization of unified Indian protest at the provincial level in 1927, when the Allied Tribes of British Columbia (organized in 1915) brought their land claims before a Special Joint Committee of Parliament. This meeting between the federal government and British Columbia Indian groups was a final stage in the development of protest based on land title that had begun sporadically as ad hoc local protest in the mid-nineteenth century. From this early beginning, it had developed into the unification of many Indian societies on a provincewide basis. Organized land protest in British

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[2]J.S. Frideres indicates that over recent years there has been a shift in the Indian attitude to education: "Education is not seen solely as an "integrative" goal but rather as a community experience." This necessarily demands a greater emphasis toward Indian control. Significantly, the Indian Association's AIEC proposal reflects this emphasis and focuses upon the critical need for strengthening the cultural base for Indian people in Alberta. J.S. Frideres, Canadian Indians: Contemporary Conflicts (New York: Prentice Hall, 1974), p. 120.

[3]Ibid., p. 112.

Columbia had gained momentum "through the activities of people like Chief Joe Capilano, the Rev. Peter Kelly, and Andrew Paull,"[4] and clearly demonstrates continuity of Indian concern and leadership over a period of half a century.

In the East, post-World War I unrest and aspirations for change among the Iroquois on the Six Nations Reserve in Brantford, Ontario, acted as a catalyst for the subsequent development of organizational activity among the Indians of the West - notably the Indians of Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Manitoba.

Members of the Iroquois Confederacy, many of them veterans of the war, conceptualized and advocated the formation of a nationwide Indian organization.[5] Hugh A. Dempsey suggests that growing political consciousness among the Eastern Iroquois contributed to the formation of the Indian Association in Alberta - in fact, was the Association's "real beginning."[6]

Following increased organizational activity among Indians in the East and West during the 1920's, establishment

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[4]Patterson, The Canadian Indian, p. 171. Patterson notes that as far as Indians are concerned, land protest is as alive today in British Columbia as it was in 1927, and that the Nishga still provide its major voice.

[5]Frideres states that "early organizational attempts were conceived in the East but attempts to formulate were generated in the West." Frideres, p. 112.

[6]Hugh A. Dempsey, "The History of the Indian Association," Kainai News, June 15, 1970, p. 10.

of the first formal Indian organizations of the inter-wars period took place among the coastal tribes of British Columbia in the early 1930's. These organizations were the Native Brotherhood of British Columbia and the Pacific Coast Native Fisherman's Association. Later, the 1940's saw the emergence of several provincially-based Indian organizations, which included the Indian Association in Alberta. Investigating this period of heightened organizational activity among Indians, Patterson notes that "the Indians of British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Ontario . . . were organized - sometimes with the support of white friends, as the Allied Tribes of British Columbia had been."[7]

British Columbia: Microcosm of Indian Protest

The continuity of leadership and issues among the Indians of British Columbia, (which possesses parallels with organizational continuity among the Indians of the Prairie Provinces), is related to the fact that Indian communities of British Columbia have remained reasonably stable and cohesive. Exploring the general pattern of organized Indian protest in British Columbia since the turn of the century, Patterson observes that despite a sharp fall of Indian population between the late eighteenth-century and the mid-nineteenth, the Indians "remained sufficiently numerous

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[7]Patterson, p. 171.

and remote in particular localities that they constituted vital and continuing communities."[8]

In addition to their ability to endure, British Columbia Indian groups have continued to be relevant to British Columbia. The development of organized Indian land protest, stemming from the threat to Indian land, took place under the influence of traders, missionaries, and administrators. This resistance "kept the Indian very much in the government's attention."[9] Significantly, documentation of organized Indian protest in the province in published historical form has continued without interruption down to the present time.

Patterson further indicates that the process of organizational growth among the Indians of British Columbia could have significant parallels with the development of organizations among the Prairie Indians. An important factor in the development of protest has been intensity and recentness of white settlement. Patterson writes:

> Issues and techniques . . . important to B.C. were an important segment of, if not a microcosm of, the general pattern of development of Indian protest in Canada. Because settlement in B.C. has been so recent . . . there has been a kind of telescoping effect of . . . processes observable in more attenuated form in other parts of the country.[10]

George Manuel, surveying the growth and development of Indian organized protest and resistance in British Columbia since the beginnings of white settlement, points to

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[8]Ibid., p. 162. [9]Ibid. [10]Ibid.

the error of identifying present Indian resurgence as "new." From a nationwide context, Indian resistance has been present in Canada since colonial conquest began, and this protest is rooted in continuity. Manuel writes:

> The appearance that we are only now coming alive is an illusion created by the press and public institutions, who have for so long warped, distorted, and falsified the story of our resistance . . . if it appears that we are only now . . . discovering our strength, it is because the current climate of political, social, and economic forces is allowing what was always beneath the surface to emerge into the light of the day.[11]

Discussing the Potlatch Law, brought in by Proclamation in 1882, then by statute in 1884, Manuel writes that Indian societies in British Columbia began to develop "new forms of political organization centred round issues raised by colonialism from the time . . . colonial forces became oppressive."[12] Even before the first test case concerning the Potlatch Law - the Hemasack Case - numerous petitions from the Cowichan and Nass River Indians had been made to local authorities concerning Indian grievances.

Far more widespread and sophisticated political organization developed on the land question in British Columbia. Manuel writes:

> Whereas organization on the Potlatch Law usually followed tribal lines, bringing together the different bands of the same society, the land question was able

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[11]George Manuel and Michael Posluns, The Fourth World (New York: Collier-Macmillan, 1974), pp. 69-70.

[12]Ibid.

to bring together many more Indian societies into a single concerted action under a common umbrella.[13]

The Fraser River petition of 1874 is regarded by Manuel as being the first extensive organizational effort "made by different Indian groups of British Columbia against the government's policy of ignoring Indian land title."[14] Following the latter petition, the Nishga "began to organize around the land issue . . . seek legal advice, and . . . develop petitions."[15] In 1906, a Squamish delegation led by Chief Joe Capilano presented a petition concerning Indian land title to Edward VII in England. Patterson, discussing this petition, writes:

> The petition, which obtained no results, claimed that: first, Indian land title in B.C. had never been properly extinguished, despite James Douglas' promise that it would be; second, whites had settled on their lands without the Indians' wishes; third, all appeals to the Canadian government had been in vain; and fourth, the Indians not only had no vote, but were not consulted by the Indian agents on matters which gravely concerned them.[16]

Three years after the Squamish delegation, an attempt

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[13]Ibid., p. 79.

[14]Ibid., p. 81. Organized Indian resistance to white settlement in British Columbia's interior had taken place as early as the mid-nineteenth century. The earliest discoveries of gold were the work of Indians. As white miners flocked in, Indians were reduced to the status of labourers for the non-Indians. Friction inevitably occurred between both groups, and acts of violence resulted. Governor James Douglas came to the assistance of the miners. Patterson, pp. 161-162.

[15]Manuel, p. 81.

[16]Patterson, p. 169.

by the province to dispossess the Skeena Indians of land near Prince Rupert prompted another Indian delegation (representing twenty tribes) to visit the King in 1909, and the same year saw the formation of the first intertribal organization for the purpose of presenting land claims - the Indian Tribes of British Columbia.[17] Six years later, the Allied Tribes of British Columbia, supported by many of the elder Indian statesmen of the day, began to organize.[18]

Manuel illustrates the continuity of Indian protest concerning this issue:

> In June, 1972, the Union of B.C. Chiefs presented a brief to the federal cabinet on the nature of . . . aboriginal title to British Columbia. The Nishga Tribal Council had taken their case for the title to the Supreme Court of Canada the previous November. This was sixty-one years after Sir Wilfrid Laurier promised B.C. Indians he would find a way to have their case heard in the Privy Council . . . forty-five years after a parliamentary committee decided the claim "had not been proven."[19]

The Six Nations: A Search for Indian Unity

As previously indicated, the Iroquois of the Six Nations Reserve, Brantford, Ontario, became involved with attempts by western Indians to build strong unified organizations in the Prairie provinces during the 1920's

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[17]Manuel, p. 82.

[18]The principal organizers of the Allied Tribes were the Rev. Peter Kelly, a Haida from the north, and Andrew Paull, a Squamish from the south of the province.

[19]Manuel, p. 31.

period.

Hugh Dempsey, investigating the earliest origins of the Indian Association, confirms this significant relationship between East and West. Noting that the Indian Association was an outgrowth of two earlier Indian organizations in western Canada, (the League of Indians of Western Canada and the League of Indians of Alberta), Dempsey observes that earliest attempts to create formal organizations among Indian groups in the West were first conceived in the East. He writes:

> The real beginning of the movement took place on the Six Nations Reserve . . . in 1920. A number of Indians, some of them veterans of World War I, wanted to organize a national Indian body to give their people a unified voice. Letters were sent across the country, with the idea of starting a League of Indians of Canada. The response from western Canada was so encouraging that late in 1920, a meeting was held in Elphinstone, Manitoba, to which Indians from the prairie provinces were invited. Saskatchewan sent the most number of delegates, while several came from Alberta and Manitoba.[20]

These first attempts to build Indian organizations in the West were continuously frustrated and hindered by government authorities. Frideres writes: "Whenever Indian leaders attempted to organize, the RCMP and/or Indian agent would arrive and stop further organization."[21] Illustrating this government interference relating to early Indian leadership, Dempsey indicates that J.B. Loft, a spokesman from the Six Nations, who called and attended the Elphinstone meeting, 1920, was consistently refused

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[20]Dempsey, p. 10. [21]Frideres, p. 112.

recognition by Federal authorities:

> Constant pressure from . . . Indian agents and the government discouraged any action on a national scale . . . attempts by Mr. Loft to take western Indian problems to Ottawa were rejected by Federal authorities, who refused to recognize him as a spokesman.[22]

Commentators of the 1920's period confirm the heightening of organizational activity among eastern Indians - particularly those of the Six Nations Reserve. The Rev. W.E. Edmonds, writing in the Canadian Magazine of February, 1921, observed that an Indian league had been formed which most of the eastern reserves and many in British Columbia had joined. In his words: "the more civilized Indians of Ontario are imparting their broader outlook and keener desire for progress to their brethren in the west."[23] R.E. Gosnell, journalist, part-time historian, and full-time public servant in the British Columbia government, writing in the March issue of the same magazine, reported that there were "symptoms of unrest" among Indians of British Columbia and the Six Nations.[24] Observing that the latter had been particularly restless concerning "supposed grievances," Gosnell hastened to assure his readers that such unrest was in the form of "constitutional

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[22]Dempsey, p. 10.

[23]Rev. W.E. Edmonds, "Canada's Red Army," Canadian Magazine 56 (February 1921): 340-342.

[24]R.E. Gosnell, "Indians and Indian Affairs in Canada," Canadian Magazine 56 (March 1921): 381-386.

agitation," and could not be compared with the "rebellious activities" of native tribes in India or Africa. Gosnell wrote that among the Six Nations:

> There are men of high intelligence and considerable education, worthy in those respects of their greatest representative in history, Joseph Brant. For this very reason, such men whose viewpoint and logic are not altogether of the white man, have given the Indian department a great deal of trouble in the way of correspondence, delegations.[25]

Gosnell concluded that Indian unrest in both East and West had been stimulated by two main influences: the Society for the Protection of Aboriginals,[26] and a "virus of unrest," which, next to victory, had been the most conspicuous product of the war.

Finally, reports by commentators of the 1920's concerning the growth of unrest among the Iroquois during this period are further substantiated by the fact that in 1923, the Iroquois Confederacy, displaying its characteristic independence and aggressiveness,[27] attempted to bring its case (for self-rule) before the League of Nations. Manuel states that the Iroquois had "secured the support of four member nations who would sponsor a resolution referring the

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[25]Ibid.

[26]Patterson describes this society, The Canadian Indian, pp. 114, 120, 126.

[27]Frideres observes that such independence and aggressiveness have given the Iroquois a "unique position among Indians in Canada," Frideres, p. 113.

matter of 'Six Nations vs. Canada', to the World Court."[28]

To conclude this chapter, it is significant to note that early organizational strategies for protest originating among Eastern Canadian Indian groups during the 1920's period (notably the Iroquois), not only quickened and encouraged the impetus for organizing among western Indian groups, but also helped to establish a base among the latter for subsequent formalization during the 30's. In addition to this important foundation, established despite continuous harassment from government authorities,[29] the desire for nationwide unification among Indians across Canada was not lost. This is verified by the fact that some 10 years after the first formal Indian organizations of the inter-wars period were established in British Columbia (the Native Brotherhood, 1931, and the Pacific Coast Fisherman's Association, 1936), the architect of the subsequent merger of these two organizations in 1942 into the Native Brotherhood, Andrew Paull, began his attempts to organize Indians on a national scale into the North American Indian Brotherhood. Patterson records that this organization began on a humble scale in late June, 1943, on

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[28]For full discussion of this case, see: Michael Posluns, "The Nations of the Iroquois," Akwesasne Notes, June, 1971.

[29]Cardinal writes that Indian leaders of this period were "labelled dangerous rabble rousers and . . . were subjected to harassment by the police," Cardinal, p. 98.

the occasion of Paull's visit to Ottawa:

> With Dan Assu of the Pacific Coast Fisherman's Association, Paull had gone to Ottawa to attend a conference on fish prices . . . afterwards, he met Assu in Montreal with Indians from various eastern reserves, including Caughnawaga. The organization then founded . . . was composed solely of non-treaty Indians. Later attempts to bring in treaty Indians of the Prairie provinces were largely unsuccessful.[30]

It was at this period that the Indian Association was being formed, (a growing rift between the Indians of Saskatchewan and Alberta occurred in 1929, and leaders of the Alberta League were seeking establishment of a new organization), while at the same time Alberta Indians were attempting to forward their many grievances to Ottawa.[31] Significantly, the Indian Association's 1945 Memorial to the Government, stressed, in its opening remarks, that consideration should be given to the needs and problems of all Indians across Canada:

> Much work is to be done at home. Perhaps the work of Rehabilitation . . . may begin at home where there is also a great need of educational, social, and economic readjustment necessary on the various member reserves of the Association and among ALL Indians of Canada.[32]

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[30]Patterson, p. 172. Manuel also records that after Paull's death some years later, Telford Adams, from the Six Nations, and other eastern colleagues of Paull were trying to reformulate the NAIB in the East, Manuel, p. 121.

[31]Dempsey, p. 10.

[32]IAA Memorial to the Government of Canada, 1945, p. 1.

CHAPTER II

FORMATION

Alberta Indian bands, particularly in the northern and central parts of the province, were influenced by increased organizational activity among Saskatchewan and Manitoba Indians during the early 1920's. As indicated in the previous chapter, these early organizational attempts were conceived in the East among Indians of the Six Nations Tribes.

Important organizational meetings were held at Elphinstone, Manitoba (1920), Thunderchild Reserve, Saskatchewan (1921), and Hobbema, Alberta (1922). Prime mover and organizer of these latter meetings (Big Iroquois meetings), was the Iroquois J.B. Loft.

During the early 1930's, the first widely attended meeting of Indians of the Prairie provinces took place at the home of J.B. Tootoosis on the Cutknife Reserve, Saskatchewan (1933).[1] Tootoosis became a prominent figure in Indian organizational work over this period, subsequently organizing a large following in Saskatchewan and taking a delegation to Ottawa in 1936.

Although the Indian Association's formal structure

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[1]Letter from J.F. Dion to Hugh Dempsey, November 12, 1960, J.F. Dion Papers, Glenbow Archives, Calgary.

had its beginnings in 1939 (with subsequent official formation in 1944), the Association was an outgrowth of two previous organizations: the League of Indians of Western Canada (established 1919), and the League of Indians of Alberta (established early 1930's).[2]

Significant in terms of Indian leadership in Alberta during the 1930's period, and for the subsequent development and growth of the Indian Association during the 1940's and 1950's, was the emergence of John Calihoo, who joined the League of Indians of Alberta in 1937 and became the Indian Association's first president in 1939. Assisting Calihoo at this time was Malcolm Norris, a former organizer of the Metis Association. Norris was instrumental in contacting John Laurie during the early 1940's. Laurie was later to prove himself an able, energetic, and courageous member of the Association's executive, and was principal architect of the Indian Association's Memorials to the federal government over the mid-forties period. Laurie, himself a schoolteacher, became deeply concerned with improving and restoring the cultural base for Indian education in the province.

Attempts to form nationwide Indian organizations in the West reappeared during the early 1940's (at which time

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[2]It is important to note that until 1939, the federal and provincial governments refused to recognize the existence or legitimacy of either league, and refused to act upon recommendations sent to Ottawa by both organizations. Frideres, p. 113.

the Indian Association was reorganizing). In 1946, Tootoosis attempted, together with Andrew Paull, to effect a coalition between the treaty Indians of Saskatchewan and the non-treaty North American Indian Brotherhood. This move took place at a 1946 conference sponsored by Saskatchewan's CCF government, and failed. Observers[3] maintain this failure was mainly due to interference by CCF government members and other non-Indian public figures.

Dion, founder of the Metis Association in 1933, writes of the Indian Association's early history:

> I was raised at Onion Lake, N.W.T., now Saskatchewan. I remember to have heard from my earliest childhood about meetings being held down East some place and that steps were in the making of sending a delegation to Ottawa to bring to light the deplorable conditions prevailing among the Cree. . . . These stories always came from the East, we never heard anything stirring in the West.[4]

One of these meetings was held at Elphinstone, Manitoba, in 1920, called for and co-ordinated by Loft. It resulted in the formation of the League of Indians of Western Canada. Dempsey notes that Saskatchewan sent the greatest number of delegates to this meeting, but that several delegates from Alberta and Manitoba were present.[5]

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[3]Frideres, P. 112, and Patterson, p. 173. Indian Association members were present at this conference to lend support.

[4]Dion to Dempsey, November 12, 1960.

[5]Dempsey, p. 10.

A second conference of the League took place at the Thunderchild Reserve, Saskatchewan, in 1921, with Loft again in attendance. Dion describes the Thunderchild Reserve meeting as the "first meeting of any consequence that I know of." He writes:

> [The meeting] was held in the Battleford Agency . . . during the summer of 1921. My father was then one of the head men of the Kehewin Indian reserve and . . . made the long trip by wagon to attend the conference. A Mr. Loft, whom the Indians called the Iroquois Chief presided . . . the main speakers . . . were old chiefs and headmen. There were a goodly number of Clergymen in attendance anxious to help their Indians organize some kind of an organization. The well-known Rev. P. Beaudry, OMI, acted as interpreter . . . Mr. Loft admitted to the clergy that the time was not ripe for the formation of an organization.[6]

Dempsey, exploring the progress of the League of Indians of Western Canada subsequent to the Battleford Agency meeting, notes that a further meeting was held at the Hobbema reserve, Alberta, in 1922, but no further meetings were held and the organization never developed beyond this point. He writes:

> Mr. Loft kept in touch with the Indian leaders but constant pressure from the Indian agents and the government discouraged any action on a national scale. In addition, attempts by Mr. Loft to take western Indian problems to Ottawa were rejected by federal authorities, who refused to recognize him as a spokesman.[7]

Yet despite much harassment and discouragement, Indian leaders in the West over the 1920's and 1930's continued with their attempts to organize their people, and

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[6]Dion to Dempsey, November 12, 1960.

[7]Dempsey, p. 10.

the League of Indians of Western Canada continued to function. The dominant membership of the League was drawn from the Crees and Assiniboine in Saskatchewan, with additional membership from Saddle Lake and other north-central reserves in Alberta.[8] A number of reserves west of Edmonton - Duffield, Glenevis, and Winterburn - supported the League, but in the early 1930's they "split off to form the League of Indians of Alberta . . . Pete Shirt, Joe Samson, and Pete Burnstick among those early organizers."[9] Frideres writes that by 1930 a serious rift had emerged between Alberta and Saskatchewan Indians, and the League "was subdivided along provincial lines."[10]

An informant[11] notes that because of the fact that organizational activity centred in Saskatchewan during the 1920's and early 1930's, Alberta Indians "never got anywhere when they attended meetings with Saskatchewan Indians . . . nothing was accomplished after the meetings." The same informant adds that once the Indian Association's parent body, the League of Indians of Alberta, was

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[8]A formative member of the Indian Association states that the Association was started in Saskatchewan by Saskatchewan Indians. Indians from Saskatchewan came to Alberta to find out what the "Treaty Indians of Alberta thought about having an . . . Association in Alberta." Interview with Cyprien Larocque, Hobbema, May 28, 1974.

[9]Dempsey, p. 10.

[10]Frideres, p. 112.

[11]Interview with John Sampson, Edmonton, February 8, 1975.

established, Alberta Indians never had connections with Indians in other provinces . . . "the League was strictly for the Indians of Alberta."

As noted, an important meeting of Indians of the Prairie provinces had taken place on the Cutknife reserve, Saskatchewan, during the summer of 1933. Dion adds that, for the first time, "Chipewyans of the Cold Lake band were in attendance."[12] Up to this time, northern Alberta Indian groups had not been involved in organizational activities in the West. Tootoosis, destined to become a hard worker for organization among Indian groups in the West (particularly Saskatchewan), was a familiar figure at Indian organizational meetings over the 1930's and 1940's, and attempted to create nationwide Indian organizations. Dion describes Tootoosis as:

> A young man then . . . very much in evidence [who] became a very active worker from then on. He organized a large following in Saskatchewan and managed to lead a party to Ottawa in 1936.[13]

Tootoosis later became leader of the North American Indian Brotherhood in Saskatchewan, and was leader of a 1946 conference, assisted into existence by Saskatchewan's CCF government. During this meeting, at which members of the Indian Association were present to lend support, Andrew Paull attempted to swing the Treaty Indian

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[12]Dion to Dempsey, November 12, 1960.

[13]Ibid.

Saskatchewan group into the non-treaty North American Indian Brotherhood, of which he was president. Tootoosis gave support to Paull's attempt to unify Indians into a stronger organization, which could act with greater political force, but the attempt failed. Patterson writes that this failure to achieve greater Indian unification at a time when Indian organizational activity needed greater thrust and strength, may have been due to "the firm hand held upon proceedings by members of the Saskatchewan government, and other public figures . . . nearly all of them non-Indians."[14] (My emphasis).

During the 1930's, a leader emerged among Alberta's Indians who was to exert a strong influence upon the formation, development, and growth of the Indian Association during the mid-forties. This leader - John Calihoo, was acutely aware of the necessity of education for Indian people in order for them to regain their cultural freedom, identity, and right to self-determination.

By 1937, Calihoo, born of Cree-Iroquois parents on the Michel reserve, had joined the League of Indians of Alberta. Two years later, "the rift between Alberta and Saskatchewan Indians was so great that Calihoo decided . . . a complete separation was necessary."[15]

Calihoo's father was Chief Michel of the Michel Reserve, and his grandfather the Iroquois Louis Calihoo,

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[14]Patterson, p. 173. [15]Dempsey, p. 11.

who, with his brother Bernard, came west as a voyageur about 1820. John grew up at Lac Ste. Anne, hunting, guiding, fishing, and freighting. McEwan writes of him: "He was self-educated but lacked nothing in purpose and carried through his life the eager desire to see his people speaking with a single voice."[16]

Calihoo demonstrated versatility from the age of 16: guiding the first herd of cattle from Edmonton to Grande Prairie (a 57 day trip by horse and stock saddle), farming, freighting (between Edmonton and places like Athabasca, Lesser Slave Lake, Ft. McMurray, etc.), furnishing beef for railroad construction camps, and carrying payrolls for camps along the railroad route being pushed westward. McEwan, describing Calihoo's pioneer struggle in starting farming, writes that Calihoo was:

> demonstrating clearly that Indians could be good farmers. He wished more Indians [would] . . . cultivate land and become active in farm organizations. With faith in farming, he maintained membership in the Farmer's Union of Alberta and the Alberta Wheat Pool. . . . John Calihoo was the first Treaty Indian to become actively associated with farm organizations.[17]

Together with Norris, Calihoo wrote a constitution for a new organization - the Indian Association of Alberta - in 1939.[18]

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[16]J.W. Grant MacEwan, Portraits from the Plains (Toronto: McGraw Hill Co., 1971), p. 242.

[17]Ibid.

[18]Dempsey, p. 10.

Organizing Indians over large sections of Alberta presented formidable difficulties for Calihoo and Norris. Cardinal, discussing this difficult period of the Indian Association's growth, writes:

> The transportation system of the day made it almost impossible to gather people together from across the country . . . days of travel by horse and wagon were required of some of the delegates. Poor communications made it . . . difficult . . . to get word to all areas about proposed meetings. There was no money to pay delegates expenses.[19]

Even more difficult was the educational process which the Indian Association's founders attempted to carry out among Indian people in the province:

> The most difficult task . . . was . . . convincing the ordinary Indian that such an organization was worth the bother. Such social structures were alien to the Indian way. The older Indians, often those with influence in their communities, saw such organizations as a waste of time. The majority were illiterate and could not be convinced with printed material.[20]

Despite these obstacles however, the courage and persistence of Calihoo exerted a strong influence towards organization among Alberta's Indian communities. An informant states that Calihoo was:

> the one who really started [the Indian Association] He was instrumental in calling up meetings with the help of several chiefs round his local area . . . (Duffield, Glenevis, Winterburn) . . . these old gentlemen were greatly inspired by his efforts. He was a good organizer - once he got them . . . I remember him saying he wasn't able to read and write when he started the organization. As years went on, he used to say he was able to read and write now after the association got started . . . he

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[19]Cardinal, p. 98

[20]Ibid.

was studying all the time I guess.[21]

Due to the organizing efforts of Calihoo and Norris, the newly formed Indian Association held its first conference in the fall in 1939. An Edmonton lawyer was engaged to meet with Calihoo and Norris at Winterburn, and a summary of the Association's resolutions were forwarded to Ottawa. Dempsey writes of these resolutions:

> Most of [them] dealt with health, education, hunting and fishing. The lawyer made the submission, but the reply was sent back to the Indian agent, who refused to divulge the information and advised the lawyer to mind his own business.[22]

This negative and insensitive response from federal agencies was hardly encouraging. An informant[23] records that Indian agents intercepted mail sent to Ottawa by the Association and read its contents. If the agent approved of a letter's contents it would be forwarded, if not "it would be put away." If the mail were not seen by the local agent, it would be "censored" by the regional office in Edmonton, and if they did not like it they "would not send the letter on." Another informant records that the Indian Association's early communications with the federal government and its agencies were "ignored and never got past

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[21]Interview with John Sampson, Edmonton, February 8, 1975.

[22]Dempsey, p. 11.

[23]Interview with John Sampson, Edmonton, February 8, 1975.

Regina."[24]

This persistent indifference and insensitivity toward Alberta Indian protest on the part of government authority is confirmed by the comments of Ralph Steinhauer, a founding member of the Indian Association. Steinhauer comments:

> We were trying to bring to the fore the hopes and aspirations of the Indian people - instead of the powers-that-be sending the word down to us, we wanted to send the word up to them . . . we're the only people in Canada who live under the rules of a federal act. We're told what to do by the minister, the government, and the department . . . you get up in the air about it after a while. We wanted to be heard and it had to be a powerful voice - those people in Ottawa take a hell of a lot of yelling at before they start to learn anything.[25] (My emphasis).

During the period, 1939-1942, a period when, as we have seen, Calihoo was establishing his leadership and attempting to unify Alberta's Indians on an intertribal basis, the organization was "a loose affiliation of reserves" from the Edmonton, Hobbema, and Slave Lake agencies, with some people in eastern Alberta supporting the Saskatchewan League."[26] Organizational meetings continued. Dion records that in the summer of 1941 a well organized meeting of Indian groups took place on the Chipweyan Reserve at Legoff. Large numbers attended from Saddle Lake, together with members of the Kehewin Band and other groups from Big Island Lake, Frog Lake

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[24]Interview with James Lapatac, Winterburn, May 1, 1974.

[25]"The Government," St. John's Edmonton Report 1 (May 13, 1974): 8.

[26]Dempsey, p. ii.

and Onion Lake.[27] In 1942, a large meeting was held at Long Lake on the Kehewin Reserve. Dion indicates that Calihoo's organizational activities were gaining much prominence at this time:

> Rumours had it that an organization under the leadership of Mr. Johnny Calihoo was well on the way in the West. Therefore, at the next general meeting at Frog Lake on July 27, 1943, it was decided to invite the people of the West into organizing "one Dominion-wide Indian Association" . . . advocated by John Tootoosis and his followers in Saskatchewan and part of Manitoba.[28]

This invitation to all western Indian groups to join in organizing on a nationwide scale became embodied in a resolution from Kehewin Local at the Indian Association's first general convention held at Hobbema in the summer of 1944. This meeting is generally recognized as "the birth of the Indian Association of Alberta."[29] A founding member confirms that this 1944 Hobbema meeting of various Indian groups crystallized the Indian Association, and it was then that "it was first organized as an association."[30]

The Kehewin resolution, not adopted at this meeting, received the attention of Norris in a letter to Dion, some

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[27]Dion to Dempsey, November 12, 1960.

[28]Ibid.

[29]Ibid.

[30]Interview with John Sampson, Edmonton, February 8, 1975.

two years later.[31] Norris, indicating that he was favourable to the idea of establishing a much broader representation of Canadian Indians, considered that the delegates did well in not adopting the resolution. More desirable, for Norris, was the formation of an "All Canada Indian Council." Outlining this organizational process, Norris wrote:

> each province to fully organize until it represents without question all Treaty Indian residents . . . or like Alberta, a greater majority of Treaty Indians in the province . . . when each may then by democratic process nominate and elect a group to represent the province upon an ALL Canada Indian Council.[32]

The Hobbema meeting in 1944 signalled another highly significant event in the Indian Association's history. John Laurie, a Calgary schoolteacher, was elected secretary of the Association, a position he was to capably hold up to his death in the late 1950's. Dion wrote of this event:

> It was at this convention that Chief Enos Hunter of the Stoney's recommended his foster son, Mr. John Laurie of Calgary, to act as secretary of the newly formed association. [This] recommendation was heartily accepted. Thus it was that Mr. Laurie took up the task of guiding the Indian Association of Alberta - and by his wise counsel became known as the "Father of the Indians of Alberta."[33]

Dempsey writes that Laurie possessed all the qualities

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[31] Malcolm Norris to Dion, November 14, 1946, J.F. Dion Papers, Glenbow Archives, Calgary.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Dion to Dempsey, November 12, 1960.

needed to help the association.[34] He had many friends, both Indian and white, and was able to enlist their support. Laurie was also a man "who felt he was there to serve the Indians, not to boss them." Norris, while serving with the air-force in Calgary, had met Laurie and was immediately impressed by the man. Subsequently, Norris:

> wrote to John Calihoo and arranged for the two men to meet. A short time later, Mr. Laurie was elected secretary of the Association . . . [and] with the assistance of people like Joe Dion, Peter Burnstick, Dan Minde, and many others, the Indian Association became an active body. Locals were formed throughout northern and central Alberta, although the Stonies were the only ones in the south to join.[35]

A founding member of the Association reports that Calihoo was instrumental in finding Laurie. Although Laurie was an "outsider" . . . "we had nobody to take down minutes of meetings and things like that."[36] All the Indian leaders agreed with Calihoo that Laurie should be the new organization's secretary.

Ruth Gorman, a Calgary lawyer who contributed her services to the Indian Association during its formative years, wrote that Laurie liked Indians as people, and was appalled at the conditions under which they lived. Laurie also felt he must help them to regain their cultural freedom and self-reliance. Gorman noted that

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[34]Dempsey, p. 12.

[35]Ibid.

[36]Interview with John Sampson, Edmonton, February 8, 1975.

Laurie:

> together with John Calihoo . . . helped [the Indians] reorganize an all-Indian association. This wasn't easy . . . tribes still remembered when they were traditional enemies, and their distrust of a white person was very great . . . often in a horse-drawn wagon, [Laurie] travelled with Johnny the rough roads from one reserve to another, fighting hostility and mistrust.[37]

Twice Laurie made trips to Ottawa to present the Indians' case, and made other trips down East "paying his own way out of his meagre teachers' salary."[38] He loaned his money continually to Indians, and at this time "there was dire poverty on the reserves and desperate needs would arise - ignored by the Indian Affairs Department."[39] Laurie's disregard for possessions (which sprang from his religious faith and his deep admiration for the Indian's culture) is illustrated by the fact that when he drew up his will, he had nothing really to leave:

> A small cabin friends had given him had been wrecked, his car gone, his bank account almost gone. He . . . drew the will to forgive his debtors so that they would have no feeling of guilt. It consisted of returning, debt-free, to their present Indian owners, horses and other things he had bought for them and which they had never been able to repay.[40]

Laurie's disdain for status and the accolades of

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[37]Ruth Gorman, "The Doctor Schweitzer of the Western Plains . . . Dr. John Laurie." Canadian Golden West Magazine 9 (September, 1972): 13.

[38]Ibid.

[39]Ibid.

[40]Ibid.

public office are demonstrated by the fact that when offered a senatorship by the Prime Minister, John Diefenbaker, he declined, suggesting instead that it had to be an Indian - the Blood Indian, James Gladstone.[41]

Dempsey writes that after the Indian Association's 1945 conference, Laurie displayed to the full his organizational abilities.[42] With assistance from other members of the Association he prepared a Memorial on Indian Affairs, which summarized the resolutions of the Association and explained what they were trying to accomplish. This Memorial was mimeographed, and copies sent to all M.P.'s and Senators in Canada. Other copies of the Memorial were mailed to press clubs, radio stations, and to clubs and societies across Canada. Dempsey concludes:

> The whole approach was entirely new, for until this time the Indian voice was seldom heard. All business was conducted through the Indian agent, and, in many cases, Indians were not even permitted to know the contents of the Indian Act. Political pressures were unknown to them . . . their meetings seldom accomplished anything except giving the opportunity to voice their frustration to each other.[43] (My emphasis).

Laurie, in addition to communicating with the government through the Memorial, used all the forces available to a Canadian citizen. He enlisted the support of Douglas Harkness, a Calgary M.P., and subsequently the opposition mounted a strong attack upon the government during its discussion of Indian Affairs in 1945.

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[41]Ibid. [42]Dempsey, p. 11. [43]Ibid.

Significantly, members of the opposition used the Indian Association's Memorial "as their source of ammunition."[44]

Subsequent to the heightened organizational activities of the Indian Association leading up to the Memorial and later, word of the Association's success at achieving unity and strength spread through the Indian communities of Alberta. The Blood Indians joined the Association in 1948, while the Sarcee, Peigan, and other southern reserves joined within a few years. Dempsey writes:

> The Association was truly province-wide . . . annual meetings were held on many reserves, usually alternating between north and south . . . members became completely familiar with parliamentary procedure and proper rules of order.[45] (My emphasis).

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[44]Ibid. [45]Dempsey, p. 12.

CHAPTER III

FORMATIVE CONCERNS: ECONOMIC AND POLITICAL

During its formative period, the Indian Association centred its main concern on the poverty and underdevelopment of Alberta's Indian bands. A shift of organizational activity was to occur later in the Association's history, when aboriginal and Treaty rights (together with education) came under closer and more systematic scrutiny.[1]

Significantly, reasons prompting the Association's formation grew from an interaction of economic factors and political influences which had been the principal cause of, and continued to perpetuate, Indian poverty. Education, considered important from the earliest beginnings of the Association, was inextricably linked with a condition of economic and political powerlessness and vulnerability; a condition which, the Association's leadership realized, must be changed before any realistic and tangible gains could be made in Indian education in Alberta.

This chapter, therefore, proposes to briefly survey

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[1]This was during the late sixties, when a major reorganization of the Indian Association took place. The Association began its program of Treaty and Aboriginal Rights Research (TARR) with financial assistance from the government. Education received close attention in Citizens Plus (Red Paper), written by the Indian Chiefs of Alberta and presented to the Federal Cabinet in June, 1970.

the economic and political condition of Alberta Indians up to the time of, and as particularly related with, the official formation of the Indian Association in the summer of 1944. It also investigates this condition in the general terms of a colonial model, proposed by Frideres,[2] which seeks to explain Indian-white relationships, especially at the administrative level.

Indian-White Relationships: A Colonial Model

A colonial model, proposed by Frideres, attempts to "present the Indian reserve as an internal colony, exploited by the dominant white group in Canada."[3] In this model, the colonizing people are those in the larger white structure, with the natives as the colonized people, and the reserve system becomes an instrument of this policy. By setting up reserves the dominant group was able "to make prime land available to white settlers and exploit the resources."[4] Within this context, the treaty/reserve system on the Prairies can be viewed as part of an economic colonial system whose principal aim was to facilitate non-Indian access to resources.

Patterson writes that through the reserve system in Canada and the reservation system in the United States, the

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[2]Frideres, p. 158.

[3]Ibid.

[4]Ibid.

"Indian experience" may be seen as part of the spectrum of colonial experience.[5]

It is significant to note, both in terms of Frideres' colonial model and the beginnings of formal organization in Alberta resulting in the formation of the Indian Association, that the latter's organizational activity - characterized by a sense of urgency and aspirations for inter-tribal unification - took place concomitant with the rapid expansion of white settlement in western Canada over the 1920's period.[6] "Organization for survival," in other words, was representative of the harsh political and economic realities facing Alberta Indians. Leadership of this organization, or movement toward Indians asserting themselves to regain "as much control as possible of the decision-making processes which shaped their political, economic, and social affairs,"[7] did not accept assimilation, but looked toward the revification of Indian culture - freed from colonial paternalism.

Economic Concerns

In order to gain a clearer view of the conditions of economic and political life existing among Alberta Indian

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[5]Patterson, p. 158.

[6]Manuel writes that British Columbia Indians were socially and economically threatened only when "the thrust of government policy was to separate the people from their land." The Fourth World, pp. 33-34.

[7]Patterson, p. 40.

groups during the early forties, it would be helpful to briefly examine some Federal reports concerning land settlement and Indian occupations issued during the post-World War I years.

The Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs for year ending March 31, 1919, wrote of Alberta Indians:

> The principal occupations of the Alberta Indians are farming and stock raising in the settled parts of the province. In the more remote areas . . . northern districts, they continue to gain their livelihood almost entirely by hunting, fishing, and trapping. Many of the Indians have found profitable employment during the past year working for white settlers, farmers and ranchers, from whom they received high wages.[8]

Meanwhile, Alberta's high potential as an area for the suitable expansion of white settlement in the future was voted in a report of the Department of the Interior of the same year:

> Since Edmonton has been connected by rail with Athabasca, McMurray, Peace River, Spirit River, and Grande Prairie, settlement has been gradually expanding in all directions . . . with its excellent pasture lands Northern Alberta has a great future in the raising of livestock . . . . Tremendous possibilities confront Alberta in the discovery of latent petroleum resources.[9]

The report stated further that considerable progress had been made with the task of settling returned soldiers upon Dominion land on the Prairies, and that "lands most

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[8]Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs, Vol. 9, No. 27, for the year ending March 31, 1919, pp. 49-50.

[9]Annual Report of the Department of the Interior, Vol. 8, No. 25, for the year ending March 31, 1919, p. 24.

suitable for farming have been reserved for soldiers."[10] The report noted with satisfaction, that settlers who entered a few years ago were applying for title and making full payments so that "revenue collected by the department has been very satisfactory."[11] The necessity for the leasing of Indian land was stressed by the Department of Indian Affairs in its March 1919 report, a necessity to be enforced by Government Order in Council:

> In view of the fact that only a small portion of land on the Indian reserves in the Prairie provinces was under cultivation, and as these reserves are for the most part situated in the productive areas . . . it was considered necessary to take measures to have these idle lands brought under cultivation, and to organize the Department in the said provinces in the most advantageous manner for the effective carrying out of such measures. An Order in Council, empowered the Inspector of Indian Agencies to make "proper arrangements with the Indians for the leasing of reserve lands which may be needed for grazing, cultivation, or . . . other purposes."[12] (My emphasis).

It is noted that administrative policies over this period, apart from facilitating the sale of Indian land for white settlement on the Prairies, also focused upon transforming the economic base of Indian groups to one based on agriculture and stock-raising.[13] Through its agricultural

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[10] Ibid.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Report of Department of Indian Affairs, p. 50.

[13] The continuity of government policy in this direction is demonstrated by the fact that the Deputy

policies, the federal government, whether directly or indirectly, attempted to make the economic base of the Indian reserve co-extensive with its social and political boundaries. One observer notes that such policies of containment were "facilitated by the lack of control by Indians over resource-productive areas outside of the reserves."[14] These areas were increasingly modified and controlled by operations at odds with Indian subsistence activities.[15]

Viewing governmental policies of containment in relation to Alberta's Indian reserves, such policies have served to maintain the reserve system, while at the same time they have provided a means to open up areas for non-Indian settlement. It is also significant in considering this policy of containment to realize that the earliest concerns and proposals for change stemming from the Indian Association focused almost exclusively upon economic problems - particularly in the area of agricultural development and stock raising on Alberta's Indian reserves.

The Indian Association was confronted by an

Superintendent of Indians Affairs, in his report for 1878, called for measures to facilitate the transfer of the economic focus of Indians from game and fish to agriculture and stock raising. Sessional Paper 7, 1879, p. 5.

[14]Douglas Hudson, "The Extension of Indian Administration into Interior B.C.: Policies and Effects." Paper presented to the Northwest Study Session Conference, Terrace, B.C., May 23-25, 1975.

[15]Ibid.

under-developed economic situation on Alberta's reserves, precipitated in the main by policies of economic colonialism set in motion at the turn of the century. Such policies can be regarded as important parts of a colonial package designed to transform the cultural and economic base of Indian society.

Steinhauer, the first Indian to be appointed Leiutenant-Governor of Alberta, states that the Association's main concerns at its formation centred round economic development on the reserves and on the obligation of the Federal government to acknowledge its responsibilities for Indian health, welfare, and education. He recalls when many acres of reserve land were sold at Saddle Lake:

> I was about 20 when white buyers came with many ten dollar bills in their pockets. I didn't like to see the land sold. I told my elders that it would be a great loss to my generation, but because I was not 21 they didn't allow me to speak at the meetings.[16]

Many Indians became increasingly concerned and affected by problems plaguing the reserves at this time; on some, fences were inadequate, the band's cattle became lost and stray cattle pastured on the reserve. Also operating at this time was the "permit system." Steinhauer writes:

> We had to have a permit from the Indian agent to sell a load of grain or a calf . . . strictly speaking we were supposed to get a permit to even leave the reserve.[17]

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[16]"A Man for the Times," Heritage Magazine, July, 1974, p. 2.

[17]Ibid.

Another early member of the Indian Association reports that the main reason for the Association's formation was to urge the government to honour its Treaty provisions, especially those relating to the economic life on the reserves. Furthermore, he states:

> [The Indians] . . . wanted to ask the government to give the people things they wanted to have on the reserves . . . such things as roads, better living, houses, so people could make a better start for themselves. Some wanted to have cattle so they could raise stock, and they wanted machinery to be bought by the Indian money they had in Ottawa.[18]

Indians from the northern parts of the province wanted:

> fishing . . . equipment. They wanted to do logging, the sawing of lumber. They had to borrow or they had to lease an outside piece of land. They wanted to be given to understand that it was legal for them to do that so long as they could pay the fee.[19]

This informant also indicates that Indians from the south of Alberta told Indians from central and northern Alberta that "they had to try and farm to help themselves." Southern Indians, however, had an advantage:

> They had bald prairie, they didn't have to brush off the place where they wanted to plough - not like here. It was about this time that the northern Indians started to try to improve themselves by farming a little more or raising cattle . . . . The Indian Association helped the Indians a lot.[20]

Disenchantment with white administration is reflected

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[18]Interview with Cyprien Larocque, Hobbema, May 28, 1974. The money referred to is the Indian Trust Fund which was accumulated by the Department of Indian Affairs for Indians.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Ibid.

in Sam Bull's history of the Whitefish Lake Band, and Indian concerns expressed are again primarily economic. Bull wrote:

> We have tried to bring certain matters before the Government but to no avail. We are a self-supporting Band and we know what will benefit us without causing our neighbours any inconvenience . . . . Going back again to the history of the Treaty, the people were promised that they would be helped in cases of crop failures or in depression cycles. We were not told that we would have to support ourselves by our own funds as is the case at present. We were told that our father, the Government, would help us. <u>There were many items mentioned that have not been fulfilled.</u>[21] (My emphasis).

Bull also indicated that a strong impetus toward organization of the Indian Association, was the continuous insensitivity of the government towards Indian grievances. He wrote:

> We were not satisfied with the administration; therefore we were forced to organize a union known as the Indian Association of Alberta . . . <u>it is already having a noticeable effect on the management of our affairs</u>. Many people have the wrong impression about this. We are not acting disloyally to our Government. We are only trying to have our wishes granted and their promises to us fulfilled.[22] (My emphasis).

Turning now to the economic situation of Indians in Alberta during the early forties, it is significant to note that this period witnessed an increasing expression of concern from various white organizations and agencies related to conditions of poverty existing among Alberta's Indian communities. It is important to observe that these

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[21] Sam Bull, "<u>One Hundred Years at Whitefish</u>: 1855-1955," United Church of Canada, p. 9.

[22] Ibid.

conditions existed despite long-established administrative measures directed toward the establishment of some form of "viable" Indian agricultural economy, and the somewhat glib official view that such an economy could lead to reasonable living conditions for all Indian people on the reserves.

An Inter-Church Memorial on Indian Education and Welfare, presented to the Minister of Mines and Resources, January 12, 1943, stated that the Indians' means of livelihood were restricted, and that the transfer of the natural resources to the Provinces seriously restricted the Indians' economic survival; the Memorial stated that "either relief rolls must be greatly increased or remedial and educational methods devised . . . or famine will take the lives of many Indians."[23]

Concern about conditions on reserves in Alberta was further reflected in correspondence between members of the Committee of Friends of the Indians, a white group organized in 1944 in Edmonton. This organization had been established to investigate those conditions and their affect upon health; also, how Indians made a livelihood. In addition, the Committee was to inquire into the adequacy of Indian

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[23]Inter-Church Memorial on Indian Education and Welfare, presented to the Minister of Mines and Resources, January 12, 1943. O.M.I. Archives, Provincial Museum, Edmonton, pp. 1-2.

education and training, and into what sort of treatment Indian war veterans could expect after the war.[24] M.H. Pitcher, president of this committee, noted in a letter[25] to members, December, 1949, that although there had been a more favourable attitude toward Indian welfare among some Ottawa officials, "apathy and indifference on the part of M.P.'s on the whole . . . as among many Canadians toward this great humanitarian question . . . was appalling." Pitcher's concluding comments on the dire nature of the Indian's economic subsistence at this time illustrate the consequences of the white economic colonialism. He wrote:

> At this very moment, there are bands of Indians, some quite near to Edmonton and many others farther away, who are facing starvation this very winter, due in large measure to the fact that the food supply of game and fish is being depleted by white people for commercial purposes.[26] (My emphasis).

Pitcher observed that the Indians of Canada, who made up but 1 percent of its population, comprised 10 percent of its tuberculosis cases. He commented: "Criminal negligence, purely and simply, is responsible for this state of affairs."[27] The committee, added Pitcher, had tried to keep

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[24]Letter from Mrs. Reta G.M. Rowan, Secretary of the Committee of Friends of the Indians, to Father Paul Charron, January 30, 1945, O.M.I. Archives, Provincial Museum, Edmonton.

[25]Pitcher to members, December, 1949, O.M.I. Archives, Provincial Museum, Edmonton.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid.

in touch with conditions among Indians in the north, and had, over the past four years, sent a delegate to the Indian Association's annual meetings, "as observer at first, but later to take part in the deliberations of the meetings."[28]

The close relationship between education and economic well-being had been pointed out in a speech made by the Rev. E.J. Staley, principal of the Indian school near Winterburn, two years previous to Pitcher's letter.[29] In this speech, Staley expressed strong concern for the Indians' conditions, and outlined the evils "brought about by insufficient funds for proper health and educational facilities among Indians living near Edmonton."[30] As an example, Staley said that his school received $180.00 per capita grant, to cover costs of tuition, board, etc. Of this amount, $150.00 was spent on food. Staley maintained that "Indians are dying from the effects of malnutrition."[31]

Political Concerns

Since stressful economic conditions encourage forms of political action, and such actions are dependent upon the

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[28]Ibid.

[29]"Speaker Condemns Indian Reserves," Edmonton Journal, February 18, 1947.

[30]Ibid.

[31]Ibid.

effective mobilization and utilization of all available resources, the Indian Association attempted, from its beginnings, to unify its members across intertribal boundaries and to speak with one voice. During this process of unification and consolidation, leaders emerged who were not only aware of the vulnerability of the Indians' position and conscious of the need for the building of more sophisticated organization, but who also saw the need for educational programs to stimulate and promote political awareness and consciousness. An important focus for this political awareness was the oppression under which many Indians lived in the province.

Viewed in terms of Frideres' colonial model, the colonized (the Indians), by virtue of conquest, containment on reserve land, and subjection to the dictates of a non-Indian bureaucratic infrastructure (notably the Indian agent), were, in consequence, barred continuously from any meaningful participation in decision-making processes affecting Indian social, economic, political, and educational development.

For the early Indian Association, the core political task was to establish an organizational base from which to overcome this oppression and subjugation.

A first objective of the organization was to establish its credibility, gain public recognition, and make forceful and effective representations of its concerns to the highest levels of Canadian government. This was

achieved through the persistent and ardous work of the Association's membership and leaders; in particular, the Association's Secretary, Laurie, who corresponded extensively and continuously with Ottawa M.P.'s, such as John Bracken, Douglas Harkness, J.R. MacNichol, and J.A. Glen.

A second objective of the Indian Association at this time, was to pressure the government to set up a Royal Commission to enquire into Indian affairs. A third objective, related essentially with the above, was revision of the Indian Act.

Appeals from the Indian Association to the federal authorities for recognition stressed fundamental democratic principles, namely: freedom of speech, assembly, and representation. In a letter accompanying the Association's Memorial on Indian Affairs, presented to the government in 1944, Laurie wrote:

> The Indian Association of Alberta representing some 8,000 Indians in the Province of Alberta, respectively requests that its representations to the Indian Affairs Branch be accepted as the Bona fide opinion of the Indians of the Reserves whose delegates were present at the Fifth General Meeting of the Association . . . members of the Association feel it is a generally accepted principle of a democratic government that the voice of a group of people be given a hearing . . . such a procedure is in keeping with the aims so frequently reiterated by Members of the government of Canada, by Ministers of the Crown, and by leaders of the UN.[32]

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[32]J. Laurie to Hon. J. Bracken, M.P., Ottawa, July 9, 1944, J. Laurie Papers, Glenbow Archives, Calgary.

Requesting that replies to the Memorial be directed to him, Laurie reaffirmed the Association's loyalty to the King and Canada:

> as witnessed by the fact that several thousand Indians are members of the armed forces, and . . . many others are engaged in working in essential industries, buying bonds and war savings stamps.[33]

J. Allison Glen, Minister of Mines and Resources, in reply to Laurie's request, in 1946, for information concerning his department's views on recognition that might be granted to members of the Indian Association, stated that he had indicated on more than one occasion that he was favorable to a close working relationship between his department's officials and the Association's members, providing the latter "work under capable and trustworthy leaders." Glen wrote:

> Members of your association on a given reserve would have the right at any time to discuss matters of general importance concerning the general welfare of the reserve with the Indian Agent.[34] (My emphasis).

Viewing this reply in terms of Frideres' colonial model, it is significant to note that the distinction between the colonized (the Indian Association membership), and the colonizers (the Department), was implicit. This dichotomy is revealed by the fact that the

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[33]Ibid.

[34]J.A. Glen to Laurie, March 23, 1946, O.M.I. Archives, Edmonton.

"Department" could only accept the Association on terms dictated by the "Department" itself, namely: the provision that the Association "work under capable and trustworthy leaders." The general framework of a colonial administrative structure usually operates upon the basis of working "with" the colonized providing it can hand-pick the leaders of the colonized. This method ensures that no radically minded person assumes leadership of the colonized, and that the status quo remains unchallenged. It should be remembered at this juncture that official recognition was denied to the Indian Association for some two decades. A second point arising from Glen's reply to Laurie, was that freedom for Indians to voice their grievances (which must be general in nature) was allowable, providing these grievances were brought to the attention of an official of the local bureaucracy, i.e. the "Indian agent." This is again a limitation of freedom rather than an expansion of choice, for many Indians had found that recourse to communication with the "Indian agent" was, in very many cases, largely wasted effort. Ralph Steinhauer has written of this procedure:

> A Native person wishing to speak to the Indian agent had to talk to him through a wicket. If the agent didn't like the discussion or if he thought it went on too long, he shut the wicket down in the face of the speaker . . . the Indian agent did not meet with band councillors.[35]

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[35] "A Man for the Times," Heritage Magazine, July, 1974, p. 2.

Glen wrote further that unresolved band grievances could be raised for discussion "by the Director of your Association with the provincial Inspector of Indian Agencies." Implicit in another section of Glen's letter were the possible "dangers" arising from inter-tribal (or inter-band) solidarity over matters of common concern for Indian people. Glen wrote:

> The information at my disposal would indicate that a great deal of friction and misunderstanding may arise when a member of one band, whether he be a member of your association or not, seeks to interfere with the administrative matter of a band of which he himself is not a member.[36]

Examining Glen's comment above in terms of the colonial model, the colonial administration, aware of the increasing power and threat of unified protest and organization among the colonized (the Indians), tends to maintain its rule through utilization of "divide-and-rule" techniques. One effective method of the colonial invader, of course, is to disrupt the colonized culture and sociopolitical organization, and displace traditional forms of leadership, replacing the latter with either colonial officials or with token "leaders" hand-picked by the colonial authority. Another method (which appears implicit in Glen's comment) is to prevent any unification of separate communities through "localizing" problems of the colonized; problems, it should be

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[36]Glen to Laurie, March 23, 1946, O.M.I. Archives, Edmonton.

noted, which are nearly always inseparably linked across local or regional boundaries. In this way, protest can be contained and major movements toward radical change avoided. The colonized may even be given the illusion that their problems are being effectively handled through this process. Paulo Freire writes of cultural invasion:

> In cultural invasion . . . the invaders are the authors of, and actors in, the process; those they invade are the objects. The invaders mold; those they invade are molded. The invaders choose; those they invade follow that choice - or are expected to follow it. The invaders act; those they invade have only the illusion of acting, through the action of the invaders.[37]

This colonial attitude implicit in Glen's remarks was also an attitude encountered by Indian groups in British Columbia in their attempts to organize upon an inter-tribal or provincewide basis. Manuel, discussing his first attempts to organize tribes of the interior, writes:

> Out of these travels came the idea of bringing together representatives from all the tribes of the interior. It was one thing for a few of us to visit each group separately, and quite another for people to meet . . . face to face and express their own concern. Indian Affairs had consulted with each group separately for all these years, and succeeded in keeping our people weak and divided. If people were ever to gain control of their own affairs it would be only through coming together and making a common cause.[38]

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[37]Paulo Freire, Pedagogy of the Oppressed (New York: Herder and Herder, 1972), p. 150.

[38]Manuel, p. 113.

Glen's concluding comments expressed his hope that immediately following the revision of the Indian Act:

> the place of the Indian Association in the general administrative set up will be more clearly defined, either by legislation or by departmental regulations.[39]

Once more, the colonial mentality is clearly presented, for in order that the Association be granted legitimate recognition by the government it must come under the government's control and vetting procedures. The Indian Association's "place" in the administration promised to be at the base of the pyramid of power, with the "Department" at the pinnacle.

To ensure that the Indian Association's various concerns be given maximum consideration by federal authorities, the Association stressed the need for a Royal Commission to enquire into Indian affairs in Alberta. Laurie was careful to point out, however, that this Commission "must be different from the several Commissions we have had."[40] Laurie outlined five suggestions which he considered to be vitally important and necessary:

(i) The members of the Commission must be sympathetic to Indians and not regard them as curiosities or a nuisance to be abated.

(ii) These members must know and understand Indians and not be people who have little or no actual

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[39]Glen to Laurie, March 23, 1946, O.M.I. Archives, Edmonton.

[40]Letter from J. Laurie to J.R. MacNichol, M.P., Ottawa, July 22, 1944, O.M.I. Archives, Edmonton.

knowledge of experience with Indians.

(iii) Some of the Commission members should be Indians. Not necessarily the rather highly advanced Indians of Ontario, but men who know tepee and trapline, men like Chief Teddy Yellowfly of the Blackfoot Reserve, Gleichen, or Johnny Calihoo of Villeneuve, George Maclean or Dan Wildman of Morley . . . Chris Shade or Percy Creighton of the Blood Reserve, Cardston, are also men of this calibre.

(iv) There should be a sufficient number of Indians to assure theirs would not be a minority report.

(v) The Commission should visit every reserve, and be free from Agents, Inspectors, and other Indian Department employees.[41]

With regard to clause (v), Laurie maintained that the presence of officials on the reserves intimidated the Indians, who had sometimes a real fear of reprisals of a petty nature. "Employees see matters from an official point of view and Indians from another point of view."[42]

Laurie, discussing the necessity for revision of the Indian Act in his letter to MacNichol, stressed that such a revision should be complete, "with the knowledge and testimony of various tribes and bands . . . along the lines of the Reorganization Act of the United States, 1933."[43] The Indian Association took particular exception to the official compulsory enfranchisement clauses of the Indian Act, and was instrumental in having these clauses removed during the early fifties.

The relationship of the economic needs of particular

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[41]Ibid. [42]Ibid. [43]Ibid.

Indian groups with the legal restrictions of the Indian Act was illustrated by a resolution submitted by the Enoch Band, Winterburn, during the early forties. This Band resolved that:

> some method should be devised to amend the Indian Act, so as to more freely permit the granting of Band Loans to private Indian farmers or other deserving Indians, for the building of houses, purchasing of tractors, machinery and equipment, or for special technical education in farm or auto mechanics, carpentry, etc.[44]

Enoch Band's resolution also suggested simplification of loan procedures, namely:

> Longer and easier credit terms
>
> Easier security arrangements
>
> Lower interest rates
>
> Loans to be arranged, so that without too much delay a promising Indian farmer privately, can obtain equipment, etc., on a repayable basis, that will not overwhelm and thus discourage him, before he can get firmly established, thus leading away from the band farm in favour of a privately operated farm.[45]

The desire of Indians to accept fuller responsibility, and to be treated as being responsible, was conveyed in the Band's concluding suggestion:

> By the Band and the Indian concerned in a loan: accepting greater personal responsibility for its ultimate success or failure, rather than having this placed almost entirely on the shoulders of the Indian superintendent through his assistants, who, because of this, may

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[44] Enoch Band Resolution, September, 1945, O.M.I. Archives, Edmonton.

[45] Ibid.

> reasonably be expected to hesitate in recommending such loans.[46]

The Indian Association's demand for a Royal Commission gained greater public attention during the spring of 1946. In terms of this study's educational focus it is significant to note that press reports of the impending Commission made reference to Indian education, and began to seriously question whether Indians were being given an adequate and culturally relevant education.

Saturday Night's issue of March 30, 1946, questioned why the native nomadic people of Russia had advanced at a far greater pace toward literacy than Canada's Indians. Saturday Night's article stated:

> Why is it . . . people ask, that the Indians of Canada today are little closer to citizenship than were their grandparents, whereas the natives of Russia have advanced within a single generation from a nomadic illiterate state to become effective and literate part of the nation?[47]

The report concluded that Indians are capable of absorbing as much education as other Canadians, and are capable, after education, "of exercising the responsibilities of citizenship."[48]

In June of the same year as Saturday Night's queries into the Indian condition, a letter from N.E. Lickers,

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[46]Ibid.

[47]"New Deal for Indians is Planned by M.P.", Saturday Night, March 30, 1946, pp. 10-11.

[48]Ibid.

Liaison Officer of the Joint Committee on Indian Affairs appointed to examine the Indian Act was sent to all Indian Agents.[49] The letter informed the agents that the Committee had authority to investigate and report upon Indian Administration in general, and, in particular upon the following matters:

1. Treaty rights and obligations
2. Band membership.
3. Liability of Indians to pay taxes.
4. Enfranchisement of Indians, both voluntary and involuntary.
5. Eligibility of Indians to vote in Dominion elections.
6. The encroachment of white persons on Indian reserves.
7. The operation of Indian day and residential schools.
8. Any other matter or thing pertaining to the social and economic status of Indians and their advancement, which, in the opinion of such a commission, should be incorporated in the revised Act.[50]

Agents were advised to call a meeting of the councils of bands or tribes under their jurisdiction, and "have them prepare a brief or other written representation dealing with matters (1)-(8) above . . . as soon as possible." (My emphasis). The desire of the government to at least give Indians the feeling that they are participating in the decision-making process is revealed in Licker's further

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[49]Letter from N.E. Lickers to All Indian Agents, June 17, 1946, J.F. Dion Papers, Glenbow Archives, Calgary.

[50]Ibid.

comment that:

> It will, no doubt, take them [the Indians] a little time to go into matters as outlined, but the Committee would like to have representations from every reserve in Canada so that all Indians may have the opportunity of presenting their own views on the subject.[51]

The question of expenses was indicated at the conclusion of Licker's urgent circular. He wrote that the Committee would also like:

> some expression of opinion from the bands and tribes if they wish to later have a delegate or delegates attend before the Commission, and whether the bands and tribes are prepared to pay the expenses of such delegate or delegates.[52]

Approximately ten months after Licker's circular to "all Indian Agents," the Edmonton Journal of April 22, 1947, reported that "for the first time since signing Treaty 7 at Blackfoot Crossing in 1877, Alberta Indians will go to Ottawa."[53] The report indicated that of the group of Alberta Indians who were to appear before the Joint Committee of the Senate and Commons, "9 are members of the Indian Association of Alberta, and 1 represents the unorganized Indians of the Province."[54]

The Journal's report named the members of the Indian Association's delegation as: - John Calihoo (President),

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[51]Ibid.

[52]Ibid.

[53]"Indians to Advise Ottawa Members," Edmonton Journal, April 22, 1947.

[54]Ibid.

Chief Frank Cardinal, Mark Steinhauer, Ed Hunter, Chief Dave Crowchild, Bob Crow Eagle, Chief Joe Bullshield, Chief Teddy Yellowfly (representing unorganized Indians), and John Laurie (Secretary).[55]

Significant to the attempts of Laurie and Calihoo to organize on an inter-tribal basis was the fact that this delegation included delegates from the Cree, Stoney, Sarcee, Peigan, Blood, and Blackfoot.

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[55]Ibid.

CHAPTER IV

FORMATIVE CONCERNS: EDUCATIONAL

The preceding chapters of this study have examined the Indian Association's roots in western Canada and its organization in the 1940's. The study has also investigated the Association's growth and development, both in terms of its political influence to pressure changes in government Indian policy, and its influences as an educational stimulus among Alberta Indians, promoting an Indian political consciousness and sense of identity. In terms of education, the Association has possessed leaders acutely aware of the value of education for Indian people, not merely for its utility in a rapidly changing, technological society, but as a principal means of overcoming a condition of dependence, wardship, and colonial oppression. Such a leader was Calihoo, who dedicated his life to his people, and who considered education as all-important in their struggle to overcome poverty and regain their cultural freedom. During recent years - stemming from the late sixties, the Indian Association has brought into sharp focus the close relationship between poverty and educational deprivation, conditions which Calihoo, and leaders following him, were determined to change.

In view of this emphasis, this study will now consider

the educational situation of Alberta's Indians during the 1940's and will examine the Indian Association's response. The study will also consider the Association's proposals for change in Indian education as embodied in its Memorial to the Federal Government, 1945.

This chapter, therefore, proposes to: (i) Examine particular aspects of the historical background of the administration of Indian education in Alberta which the study believes to be essentially related with the crystallization of Indian concerns in the 1940's in the area of education; (ii) Survey the principal educational concerns outlined in the Inter-Church Memorial on Indian Education and Welfare submitted to the Minister of Mines and Resources, January 12, 1943; and, (iii) Examine, at some depth, the Indian Association's principal concerns and proposals for change in education as contained in its Memorial to the Federal Government in 1945.

It is suggested that the Inter-Church Memorial and the Indian Association Memorial are significantly related, as they demonstrate a parallel concern. This concern was basically humanitarian, in contrast with governmental inquiries into Indian problems at this time, which were generally based upon the grounds of political expediency and utility.

Missionary Education and the Acculturation Process

The situation of neglect existing in Indian schools in

Alberta was the product of history, a history of colonial administration, whose procedures and policies were set in motion by the machinery of white government following the signing of the Treaties.

The Indian Act of 1876 was a new step in the regulation of Indian life.[1] It provided the framework, built on earlier precedents, "for the controls, prohibitions, and restrictions under which hundreds of thousands of people were going to live from that time to our own."[2]

Although the Indian Act was regarded as "new," in the sense that it could effect greater uniformity and efficiency in the administration of Indian affairs, the origins of the Act's terms and purposes were not. Consequently, the Act's underlying purposes and aims, stated many times from the mid-nineteenth century to the mid-twentieth by successive administrations, such as, "protection" and "advancement," have proven to have had a significant influence upon the administration and development of Indian education by white educators. Thus, the Indian Act emphasized the main aim of government in the 1870's and 1880's as being "acculturation" of Canada's Indians, an aim becoming firmly entrenched in its attitude toward the education of its Indian "wards," and serving to establish the core of government Indian educational policy during the present century.

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[1]Patterson, p. 123.

[2]Ibid., p. 136.

Indians, under the terms of this administrative ideology, should, and must, accept the culture of white Canadian society, and by the process of enfranchisement "become merged with the general society."[3] Collier describes such processes of directed culture change, sanctioned by government authority, as part of a larger "drive," inherent in modern industrial-bureaucratic society. It is:

> a forceful drive . . . polite persuasion through "engineerings of consent" . . . the crushing or surrender of human differences [which] operates in the very zeitgeist of contemporary man. It is a conscious drive, more profoundly an unconscious drive.[4]

It is important to note that even prior to the 1870's and 1880's, reports from Commissions investigating Canadian Indians in the 1840's and 1850's called for much greater efforts to Christianize and Westernize the Indian.[5] Agriculture was regarded as the major component for Indian survival "since hunting for food and trade purposes was no longer deemed adequate."[6]

While the process of directed "acculturation" was taking place, the reserve system was made to serve as a protective

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[3]Patterson, p. 124. Indian response to enfranchisement has been poor. Only a minority have willingly accepted it over one hundred years.

[4]Reply of John Collier, "Pluralism and the American Indian," in Roger C. Owen, James J.F. Deetz, and Anthony D. Fisher, (eds). The North American Indian (Toronto: Collier-Macmillan Canada Ltd., 1969), p. 691.

[5]Patterson, p. 122.

[6]Ibid.

device and a training ground. according to government plans. Agriculture was viewed as becoming the reserve's prime economic activity. Following the demise of the buffalo, some Indians took up agriculture under clerical direction and leadership. Others did not prove to be so immediately adaptable as was assumed by the white authorities. Patterson writes:

> The cultural change required was too abrupt to be encompassed easily. Often the missionaries did not understand, and they interpreted the reluctance or resistance of the Indians in much the same way that they viewed other cultural chasms that proved unbridgeable or difficult and slow to cross.[7]

Lasting from the years following the signing of the Treaties up to as late a period as the mid-twentieth century, education of Indians remained the principal responsibility of the Christian missionaries. Combined with pressures toward becoming more agricultural, the policy of "the Bible and the Plough" continued to be that of the government's Indian Affairs Branch up to the same period. Cardinal writes that the Canadian government:

> inexplicably did not participate actively in the educational program for Indian children until in the early 1950's, and did not vigorously pursue that policy until the mid- or later fifties.[8]

Missionary education on the reserves was not in conflict with the government's policy of containing Indians,

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[7]Ibid., pp. 125-126.

[8]Cardinal, p. 52.

and offered a convenient way of pacifying them.[9] Cardinal writes that the employment of missionaries as the "educational agents" of white society was one consequence of the expansion of white settlement:

> As white people encroached more and more on Indian land, the government employed multiple forces, the missionaries, the police, the Hudson's Bay Company and its own Indian agents, as salesmen for its own pacification program . . . the missionaries were interested primarily in a high conversion score. The government were [sic] interested in keeping the savages quiet. Their aims dovetailed, and the Indian was the pawn.[10]

Although much can be said about the inherent good intentions of the missionaries in educating Indians over this period, and that without their efforts "the educational level of Indians might be even lower than it is at the present time,"[11] much more has to be said about the role "the misguided missionaries played in the disruption of the Indian's way of life."[12] McCullum, discussing missionary education of Indians, notes that practically the only white people in the north who can be said to have any long-term familiarity with various native languages are the Roman Catholic and Anglican clergy; yet, despite this fact, one of the most controversial areas of church involvement with Native people has been the educational system, operated by

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[9]Patterson, p. 124.

[10]Cardinal, p. 53.

[11]Ibid.

[12]Ibid.

the clergy through residential schools and hostels.[13]

McCullum writes further:

> Over the years, many thousands of Natives - Indians, Metis and Inuit have gone through the church-operated residential schools across Canada, and while they were once the pride of the churches . . . they are now often considered a blot on the church's history in the North.[14]

The education of Indians, observes McCullum, has been a problem since the beginning of white settlement; it has always been white-dominated and still has little relevance for most natives. Quoting statistics in support of his argument, McCullum states that these revealed in 1974 that 94 percent of status Indian children dropped out before finishing high school, as opposed to 12 percent for white young people, and less than 40 percent of natives finished grade eight.[15] McCullum concludes that while these abysmal statistics are not solely to be blamed on church residential schools:

> They illustrate the contempt most white educators have had since the beginning of the assimilation process for anything Native. Curricula was designed by whites and taught by whites in an environment whose purpose was to make "apples" of all Natives - red on the outside, white on the inside.[16]

Cardinal, taking an overview of education provided for

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[13]Hugh and Karmel McCullum, This Land is Not For Sale (Toronto: Anglican Book Centre, 1975), p. 175.

[14]Ibid.

[15]Ibid., p. 176.

[16]Ibid.

Canadian Indians prior to the mid-fifties, maintains that lack of educational opportunities "marks these generations as a time of neglect which is still taking its toll."[17]

The 1940's: Crystallization of Educational Concern

Agitation for improved educational facilities and for a considerable expansion of opportunities for higher education for Indian children in Alberta occurred in the early 1940's. Such concerns, tending to receive much greater public prominence, (while meeting, at the same time, considerable public apathy and indifference), pointed to the inadequacies of church-operated residential schools in the province.[18]

A major factor contributing toward this was the emergence of Indian spokesmen who continuously stressed that the education of Treaty Indians was a federal responsibility arising out of the government's Treaty obligations to Indian people. In view of this rising and unified Indian protest, federal responsibility and obligation could be no longer hidden, passed on to other bodies, or evasively ignored.

A second factor, which should not be underestimated, was that the churches themselves had become increasingly

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[17]Cardinal, p. 55.

[18]The Indian Association noted in its Memorial to the Government, 1945, that "life on certain reserves makes day schools impracticable," but also added that "Indian students in day schools make faster progress than those in residential schools and acquire facility in the use of English much more readily." Indian Association Memorial, 1945, p. 6.

concerned, both with the costs of operating Indian schools and with severe financial losses resulting from the government's reduction of *per capita* grants for Indian residential schools - a reduction occurring concomitant with large cost-of-living increases across Canada. The churches' concern in this area is reflected in the Indian Association's Memorial to the government in 1945, which stated that:

> The government has failed in its duty by . . . throwing a large portion of its responsibility upon the churches concerned with Indian education and . . . charitably minded persons.[19]

Laurie also wrote in a letter to Ottawa in 1944, that governmental grants were inadequate, and "put too heavy a burden upon the generosity of the churches."[20]

The theme of federal responsibility for the education of Indians arising from Treaty obligations provides the basis for concerns expressed in an Inter-Church Memorial on Indian Education and Welfare, submitted to the Minister of Mines and Resources, January 12, 1943.[21]

This Memorial was presented at an interview between government officials and representatives of religious groups

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[19]Ibid.

[20]Letter from Laurie to J.R. McNichol, M.P., Ottawa, July 22, 1944. O.M.I. Archives, Edmonton.

[21]Inter-Church Memorial on Indian Education and Welfare to Minister of Mines and Resources, January 12, 1943. O.M.I. Archives, Provincial Museum, Edmonton.

which had missions and schools among the Indians throughout Canada.[22] It is considered important for this study's purposes as it contains specific information about the state of education among Indians at this period, and covers areas which were particularly important for the Indian Association. The churches' Memorial also demonstrated that Indians, through their organizations, were critically aware of deeply-rooted problems and were proposing practical solutions and realistic alternatives.

The Memorial's purpose was to put before the government a number of matters vitally affecting the wellbeing of the Indians of Canada, especially the younger generation, and to discuss concerns relating to grants for residential schools. Noting that four years had passed since church delegates last held consultations with the government representatives on November 21, 1939, the Memorial stated:

> At that time . . . we were still suffering from crippling financial losses resulting from the arbitrary decision of the Government then in power, to materially reduce the <u>per capita grants</u> for Indian Residential Schools. The total loss thus sustained between the years 1932-1938 was estimated at $800,000 and some of us have been saddled with heavy bank overdrafts ever since. Although the government of that day had by then relented to some extent, and removed some of the severe cuts made, they have not removed all, and words cannot easily express the sense of relief and gratitude we felt when you decided that the remaining cuts would be removed at once. However, our feeling of relief was shortlived for, while the restoration of the 5 percent cut became effective on

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[22]Catholic delegates were: Mgr. Alexandre Vachon, Archbishop of Ottawa, Mgr. Henri Belleau, O.M.I., apostolic vicar, James Bay, Fr. J. Primeau, S.J., principal of the Spanish school, and Fr. J.O. Plourde, O.M.I. Anglican delegates, together with representatives of the United Church and Presbyterian general moderators, were also in attendance.

> January 1, 1939, a new cut . . . of 7.76 percent in authorized pupilage was ordered to take effect retroactively on January 1, 1940.[23]

The Memorial stressed that the education of Indians was a federal responsibility arising from its Treaty obligations:

> When certain Treaties were made with the Indians the government undertook to provide schools on the Reserves so soon as the Indians should desire them. In fulfilment of the spirit of that the present educational policy has been undertaken. It seems to us that one of, if not the first responsibility of the Government is to provide buildings and equipment so that every Indian child of school age may attend.[24]

Investigating this responsibility of the government in relation to its statistics, the Memorial drew attention to the fact that, while the number of Indian children recorded in the census of 1939 was 26,394, the provision of school buildings had been:

Residential schools	:	8,518
Day schools	:	8,427
Making a total of	:	16,945

> Consequently, over 9,000 Indian children of school age were without any provision by way of buildings for their education.[25]

To further illustrate the serious discrepancy existing between the needs of Indian children and the facilities available for their education at this time, the Memorial

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[23]Inter-Church Memorial, p. 1.

[24]Ibid.

[25]Ibid., p. 2.

gave an instance of this in Alberta:

> In the Province of Alberta there is only one Day school; all other education is provided by Residential schools.
>
> | | | |
> |---|---|---|
> | The number of children aged 7-16 | is: | 2,867 |
> | Enrolment in Residential schools | is: | 1,978 |
> | Enrolment in Day school | is: | 32 |
> | Total in school | is: | 2,010 |
>
> Therefore, 857 Indian children of school age were denied accommodation in any kind of school.[26]

The Memorial added that if the full authorized pupilage had been in the residential schools a small fraction of this number might have been accommodated. Looking at attendance, the Memorial quoted examples from Manitoba to demonstrate its contention that even if attendance were 100 percent, accommodation would still be denied to many children:

> Let us look at . . . situations in Manitoba: - God's Lake Reserve, 90 children, 2 schools with an enrolment of 73, and actual accommodation for only a fraction of that number. If all the children who are enrolled attended the same day, they could not be put in the buildings, not to mention given seats or desks or any kind of instruction.
>
> Island Lake Reserve, 264 children, enrolment 113, seating capacity for less than 50 percent of even this number. Even in Ontario, on the Six Nations Reserve, on which there are 715 children of school age, we find 12 school buildings with a total enrolment of 597, with 14 teachers, or an average of 42 children per teacher. How were the other 118 children on the reserve to be looked after?
>
> Tyendinaga Reserve, 291 children, 4 schools, total enrolment, 138. If all the children are to be accommodated, the 4 teachers would have an average of 73 children each to look after.[27]

Conceding that the exigencies of war limit the new construction of school buildings, the Memorial added that

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[26]Ibid. [27]Ibid., pp. 2-3.

some program of public works would have to be undertaken after the war, and that material "salvaged from temporary war time buildings might be available for such purposes."[28]

Discussing attendance enforcement, the Memorial reported that even if accommodation were made available for all children there would remain the task of seeing that all attended; the churches had no control over and not much influence with those "in charge of the machinery of attendance."[29] Average attendances for residential and day schools were given as 90 percent and 70 percent respectively, meanwhile it was still difficult "to get the Indian to see the value of education."[30]

Of significance to this study's investigation of educational process and its economic relationship is the Memorial's emphasis of the fact that education could not have any practical value for the people unless it was accompanied by real improvements of <u>economic conditions on the reserves</u>. Further, the churches' Memorial was aware of the influences of the movement of Indians to urban centres, and the problems such movement posed for them under the then existing non-flexible system:

> We would particularly draw the attention of the Department to the fact that large numbers of Indians living on reserves in Ontario are finding work in nearby towns and cities. Some take their families with them and the children are being deprived of any education.[31]

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[28]Ibid., p. 4. [29]Ibid., p. 6. [30]Ibid. [31]Ibid., p. 3.

On curriculum, the churches' report maintained that the various church groups were "doubtful" if the present curriculum was best for Indian children. It stated:

> Curriculum . . . is based very largely upon that of the white man. If education is preparation for living, that education which is good for the white man is hardly that which should be imparted to a nomadic Indian of the north.[32]

Observing that there had been a measure of "elasticity" in one program of studies, the report maintained that the time was ripe for a careful study of every phase of Indian education:

> We would suggest the appointment of a competent educationalist who would make a study of Indian conditions of life in all its phases . . . then submit recommendations to a Conference of Department officials and representatives of the Churches having missions among the Indians.[33]

It is significant to note here - particularly in terms of the Indian Association's concerns about white authorities consistent refusal to consult Indians concerning Indian matters - that once again Indians were to be omitted from consultation in matters vitally affecting their future, in this case, education. Such procedures are highly characteristic of colonial structures, and would apply to Frideres' colonial model for Indian-white relations. Clive Linklater has stated that this type of thinking creates and perpetuates the "Indian problem."[34]

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[32]Ibid.

[33]Ibid., p. 4.

[34]Letter from Clive Linklater to Indian Record, February 20, 1962.

Concern was expressed in the Inter-Church Memorial for the serious dislocation of the Indians' normal way of life caused by the war, and for the even graver dislocation which transition from war to peace would bring. The report noted that many Indians working in various industries were making good money and saving none. When the war was over, these men, for the most part, would be the first to lose their jobs. Problems of maintaining "industrial discipline,"[35] gained through the Indians' participation in the war-time economy, could spell disaster for Indian "moral standards." The Indians:

> will return to the reserves . . . to a life monotonous in extreme in comparison with the days they lived in the city. It will take the most careful planning to prevent a lowering of moral standards. Such careful planning . . . if carried out wisely and in time, will conserve some of the gains which the more disciplined life of industry might have brought to Indians.[36]

Stressing the need of the churches to obtain increased revenue from the government to operate residential schools satisfactorily, the Memorial stated that the co-partnership relationship between the churches and the government in the education of Indians has been beneficial to Indian children.

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[35]Michael Katz has noted that every society since the industrial revolution has had to develop a mechanism "for changing the behaviors appropriate in a traditional society into those called for by modernity." America has handled the problem of "industrial discipline" through the schools. The Indian, for the Department of Indian Affairs, was to be no exception to this method of indoctrination. Michael B. Katz, Class, Bureaucracy, and Schools (New York: Praeger Publications. 1972), pp. 32-33.

[36]Ibid., p. 5.

The advantages to the government of such an arrangement had not always been recognized, but the churches could no longer bear the financial burdens of providing Indian children with an education. The Memorial stated:

> The time has come for us to say we cannot any longer continue to assume the difference in the cost of operation between what the Government is now paying the churches in per capita grants and the present costs of providing for the needs of children in these schools.[37]

Discussing the government's action in cutting authorized pupilage by 7.76 percent, the Memorial concluded that the ultimate sufferers are either the Indian children, who must be denied an education, or the churches, who must devote even more of their depleted resources. Some arguments might be applied if the education were of the kind "generally known as higher education," but the government should remember:

> that this is absolute elementary education, and that the very thing for which the United Nations are fighting is being denied to Indian children . . . . To the churches it is unthinkable that Indian children should be denied education.[38]

Summarizing their report, the Inter-Church group wished to impress upon the government:

(1) The need of making such additions to existing facilities as will make adequate provision so that every Indian child of school age may receive an education.

(2) The need to enforce school attendance so as to overcome inertia of parents and to make the investments of the government and the churches in education fully productive.

(3) The necessity of developing curricula suitable for types of life in various sections of the country.

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[37]Inter-Church Memorial, p. 6. [38]Ibid.

(4) To make further reports to assist the Indian to improve the economic conditions of his life, rather than increase relief expenditure.[39]

The Indian Association's Memorial to The Federal Government, 1945

Concerns of the Indian Association relating to the education of Indian children during the early forties arose from the special needs of Indians in various parts of the province. The Association pointed to the fact that such needs were either not being adequately met, or were not even being considered by the government authorities.

Although there was some variation in educational needs, according to particular location and surrounding environment of Indian communities, together with the influence of population growth, the Indian Association was able to summarize the general needs of Indian children in the area of education in its 1945 Memorial.[40] These needs can be stated as follows:

(1) The crucial necessity for increased school accommodation to ensure that every child of school age could receive an education.

(2) The need for adequate, well-equipped facilities within existing schools to enable satisfactory training to take place in such subjects as industrial arts and domestic science.

(3) The need for school texts - particularly those deemed necessary to establish an adequate foundation

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[39]Ibid., p. 10.

[40]Indian Association's Memorial to the Government of Canada, Minister of Mines and Resources, and Officials of the Indian Affairs Branch, 1945, O.M.I. Archives, Provincial Museum, Edmonton, pp. 5-10.

for higher education.

(4) The need for opportunities to be made available for students to progress into higher education.

(5) The need for a completely revised and carefully planned curriculum, relevant to Indian culture.

(6) The need for suitably qualified teachers, specially trained for teaching in intercultural situations, and sympathetic to Indian needs. Such teachers should be paid sufficiently well to hold them to their jobs.

(7) The need for extension of day school education on the reserves, with the option of attending day schools off the reserve until such facilities become available.

(8) The extension of the school leaving age for Indian children up to 18 years of age.

(9) The need for an increase in school grants (per capita) for residential schools, which should be $300.00 per child per annum.

(10) The need for the provision of winter clothing of better quality in certain areas of the province for Indian children.

(11) The necessity for an end to put to the practice of making boys work on school farms for no wages ("Child Labour"); such children should attend full time in the classroom.

(12) The costs of children attending day schools off the reserve to be borne by the Indian Affairs Branch.[41]

As an introduction to its educational concerns, the Association maintained that education for Indians had been guaranteed by Treaty, and that educational systems, however efficient at the time of their inauguration, become inadequate for peoples' needs in a changing world; in addition, "no province in Canada has retained without

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[41]Ibid., pp. 9-10

revision an educational system 75 years old."[42] Residential schools had served a useful purpose, and were the best type of schooling for the needs of people in earlier days, yet it had become apparent that day schools could best serve the needs of many reserves today.[43]

Accordingly, the Association submitted a resolution that properly equipped, modern day schools, under properly certified teachers, be established and maintained entirely at the expense of the federal government on the following reserves:

Samson #137	Saddle Lake #125	Pigeon Lake #138
Michael #132	Enoch's #135	Alexander #134
Bulls #138B	Pauls Band #133A	
Alexis #133	Goodfish Lake #128	

[44]

Discussing curriculum, the Memorial expressed no doubt that a "flexible curriculum, adaptable to the needs of students, could now be established."[45] Discussing the merits of day school education as against the residential school system, the Memorial stated that Indian parents could educate children in household and farm duties. The Memorial stated:

> Parents . . . have a right to the company of their children, and a right as parents to supervise their home life. The present system has been aptly compared to the life of a calf or dairy cow. The calf is separated from its mother soon after birth; it is fed by a stranger and in a short time is completely out of touch with its

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[42]Ibid., p. 5.

[43]Ibid.

[44]Ibid.

[45]Ibid., p. 6.

mother who neither recognizes it nor is recognized by it.[46]

Day schools could concentrate upon their proper function - academic or trades training. Under the residential school system approximately 3 years of school had brought no academic results; figures released in the annual report showed that "the drop-off in school attendance comes at grade six."[47] Increasing numbers of Indian parents were seeking the right to withdraw their children from the reserves (indicated in the resolution above), and to enter them in municipally operated schools; this, maintained the Memorial, showed that there was an appreciation of the merits of day school education.[48]

The Memorial stated that the progress of children attending day schools:

> compares favourably with that of their white school mates. Any idea that the average Indian is less naturally equipped with native intelligence than the average white is psychologically unsound. This has been demonstrated in the United States. Progress among the Maoris of New Zealand or among the tribes of Soviet Russia lends incontrovertible evidence to the conclusion.[49]

Flexibility and practicality characterized the Association's "threefold Plan" for the revision of Indian education. The Memorial outlined this threefold plan as follows:

A. On the reserves stated, day schools should be put into operation.

B. On other reserves, such as the Stoney Indian Reserve

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[46]Ibid. [47]Ibid. [48]Ibid. [49]Ibid.

> at Morley, where the reserve is so completely inadequate that it is impossible for . . . Indians to remain on the reserve and stay alive, the residential school should be allowed to retain such service with properly increased per capita grants to allow the management of the school to render the educational service it would like to.
>
> Some residential schools will have to be maintained to accommodate orphans or the children of widows or widowers who are unable to provide proper home surroundings.
>
> C. A semi-residential school, properly financed and equipped, should be maintained during the transition stage or where parents are at home part of the time. The children in such a school may be permitted to spend weekends and short holidays with their parents.[50]

These various schools, the Memorial maintained, were functioning with success in the United States, often all types on the same reserve; surely Canada was no less capable of "inaugurating and maintaining a reformed system of Indian education."[51]

The Association also submitted that under the present system of schooling, Indian children were being deprived of their legal rights:

> Family allowances are payable to Indians as well as to Chinese, or to white children. But, because he is forced to attend residential school, the Indian child is deprived of his share of the Family Allowance from the age of seven years to age sixteen. If he does not attend school, and there are many schools too small to accommodate the children of school age on the reserve, he is likewise ineligible - because he is not at school. Thus, the Indian child is caught on the prongs of a double fork, no matter what he does. It is submitted that such a state of affairs can be simply and easily remedied, so that the Indian child may receive all the benefits intended by the Family Allowances Act.[52]

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[50]Ibid., pp. 7-8. [51]Ibid. [52]Ibid.

In the area of religious education[53] the Indian Association submitted its resolution that "all Indian children of school age be freely admitted to any educational institution regardless of their religious denomination."[54]

Maintaining that religious education was essential as a part of any general education, the Association suggested that it could be provided as it was then in many white schools:

> Inasmuch as each reserve has at present, either resident or visiting clergy, there is no reason to suppose that when day schools are set up, these clergy may not provide religious instruction to the children of their respective faiths at certain periods provided for the same.[55]

On the question of per capita school grants, the Association stated that such grants should be increased to $300.00 per child per annum, the increase to be used for better educational facilities and services. It reported:

> The present per capita grant of $170.00 per annum . . . is totally inadequate. No school can function on approximately sixty cents per day per child . . . it is degrading in the extreme that principals of Indian schools should be compelled to beg from charity in order to maintain services, buildings, and staffs.[56]

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[53]Increased pressures toward integration, which included off-reserve education in non-denominational schools, prompted the formation of the Catholic Indian League at Cap-de-la-Madeleine, June, 1954. This organization lasted until 1965. Findings of this study confirm that its major concerns closely paralleled those of the Indian Association.

[54]Indian Association Memorial, p. 7.

[55]Ibid.

[56]Ibid.

The Association further observed that expenditure for war purposes was never lacking, and that surely "education for life is as important as education for destruction, however needful wars may be."[57]

Examining the crucial need for increased opportunities for higher education, the Indian Association prefaced its remarks in this area by stating that "the time has come when Indian schools should educate."[58] The government was further informed that an urgent need of academic education existed, "unless Indians are to be intentionally maintained as an inferior race, capable of only manual and casual labour."[59] Too few talented Indian children received encouragement to prepare themselves for higher education, and strong factors acted against further education for Indians. These factors included: the small per capita grant, the system of half-time work in the schools, and the "defeatism" of the sixteen-year old limit then generally imposed.[60]

Although Indian Affairs provided grants for higher education, the Memorial stated that such grants were very difficult to obtain, and even when obtained, were often totally inadequate:

> A modern city high school charges a rising scale of fees, from $70.00 per annum to $100.00 per annum to children coming from outside districts. In addition, board and lodging, laundry, books, clothes, are all essential costs. Few Indian parents are so happily situated economically in this province as to be able to

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[57]Ibid., p. 8. [58]Ibid. [59]Ibid. [60]Ibid.

bear all these extra costs.[61]

Indians, continued the Memorial, who received higher education, could be brought into the Indian service by inducements similar to those prevailing in the United States. The Memorial added that "Indians who have been able to obtain higher education have been as successful as the average white, often more successful since the motivation was stronger."[62]

Finally, the Memorial advised the government that in view of its representations, and those of various other organizations concerning neglect of Indian education, "the entire system of Indian education is in need of revision."[63] In view of this, a commission of competent and practical educationists should be appointed to study the needs of the Indian education system; meanwhile, "human intelligence is being wasted which might contribute much of value to the life of Canada as a whole."[64]

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[61]Ibid., p. 9. [62]Ibid. [63]Ibid., p. 10. [64]Ibid.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study have demonstrated that Indian organizational growth in western Canada during the immediate post-World War I years, subsequently developing into the formal Indian organizations of the late 1930's, and early 1940's, had, as its principal concern, the future economic development and economic security of the various Indian groups situated in different parts of the western provinces.

Such organizational growth, characterized by a continuity of issues and leadership, sought to effect intertribal unification upon both a provincewide and nationwide basis. Through this unification it was believed that collective demands could bring about changes in the Indian condition. Concomitant with this organizational growth, the political, social, and economic awareness of Indians was considerably heightened by the emergence of leaders who were not only aware of the immediate causes of poverty and neglect upon the Reserves, but who were also formulating and presenting long-term proposals for fundamental changes within the structure of Indian-white relationships. It is stressed that the emergence of this leadership was not some unique or disconnected event in

Canadian Indian history, but was the manifestation of one further stage in the long history of Indian protest whose roots can be traced to the first days of white invasion and settlement. The study would further maintain that nomenclature used by some investigators in their description of the Indian response to white society, viz. - "an articulatory movement," is overstated. If one of the main characteristics of an "articulatory movement" is that it lacks an "identifiable leadership,"[1] this study's explorations in the area of Indian organizational activity in Alberta would confirm that the opposite has taken place.

Of principal concern for the Indian Association since its first formation has been the core problem of poverty among Indians in Alberta. This core problem relates to the educational situation of Indians. Cardinal states:

> The basic cause of our social, economic and educational problems stem from our state of poverty. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is unable to understand or cope with poverty. If it tried in a serious way to understand and then defeat the problems of poverty there would be some hope for our people but its priority is not our people or the problems they face, its principle concern is survival . . . .[2] (My emphasis).

As indicated in Chaper IV of this study, the core

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[1]Frideres, p. 117.

[2]Speech by Harold Cardinal to Meeting of the Indian-Eskimo Association of Canada and the Native Council of Canada, December 14, 1971, CASNP Papers, Trent University Archives.

problem of Indian poverty[3] cannot be disassociated from the intrusion of white colonial administration and its policies into Indian life which have set the pattern of Indian-white relationships since the signing of the Treaties.

Specific reasons for Indian poverty in Canada are too complex to be summed up quickly, but the general principle underlying them is clear:

> A strong argument exists for viewing Canadian people of Indian ancestry as a colonial people, who have been treated and in effect controlled by outside authorities over which they have had no direct control.[4]

This colonial principle has "permeated every government and public attitude towards the Indian."[5]

Frideres' colonial model, examined in Chapter IV of this study in relation to the economic and political concerns of the Indian Association, sees the Indian reserves as "internal colonies," the Indians as the colonized, and the governing white bureaucracy the

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[3]Statistics from a 1965 study revealed that over 40 percent of Indian and Metis families earned $1,000.00 or less - the level of absolute deprivation for an individual. More than 16 percent of Indian and Metis families lived in one-room shacks. More than half of them lived in three rooms or less. Only 13 percent of Indian and Metis homes had running water. John Harp and John R. Hofley, (eds). Poverty in Canada (Toronto: Prentice Hall, 1971), p. 240.

[4]Ibid., p. 243.

[5]Ibid.

colonizer. Patterson[6], comparing the Canadian Indian experience to the experience of aboriginal peoples in other parts of the world, maintains that through examination of the recurrent themes emerging from processes of colonial invasion and subjugation in colonized countries, the Indians can be seen more clearly as a colonial people. All of these themes can be related with Canadian Indian history since the beginnings of white settlement, but one theme - that of the colonial administrative pattern and systems of indirect rule - is considered to be significantly related to the formation and growth of the Indian Association in Alberta.

This colonial pattern, with its accompanying colonial mentality, is clearly demonstrated by the opposition of white authority toward the early Indian Association's demands for recognition as a bona fide organization during the mid-forties, fully representative of the Treaty Indian population of Alberta. It also remains in existence to the present (albeit with a new rhetoric) and has significantly influenced the Indian Association's effectiveness in economic and educational development. Patterson notes that the method of governing Indians in Canada through chiefs and band councils has elements of indirect rule in it:

Like indirect rule in other places, it also by its

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[6]Patterson, pp. 15-23.

> very existence created or implied political and social relationships which were new and/or different from previous custom. In the case of Canada, the bureaucracy of Indian administration played the role of colonial officers in the field.[7] (My emphasis).

As we have seen, colonial patterns of authority established by the Indian Act of 1876, apart from severely disrupting Indian social and economic life, have placed Indians in a condition of almost complete dependency upon white authority. It should be also noted that the self-perpetuating nature of this latter authority is itself highly dependent upon Indian dependency; in short, Indian autonomy poses its greatest and most powerful threat. The Indian Act, established as law:

> removed from the Indian the autonomy that is essential to the creation of strong leadership. People who are not required to make responsible decisions do not develop the ability or desire to do so. In . . . many cases the Indian Act took precedence over the desires and the will of the Indian people.[8]

An important authority within the colonial administration governing and influencing Indian life has been, and remains, the Department of Indian Affairs. This study has demonstrated that its field administration (Indian Agents) were extremely wary of Indian organizational growth and activity in Alberta during the 1920's and 1930's, and regularly blocked or impeded representations of Indian concern to authorities in Ottawa. Over recent years, with

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[7]Ibid., p. 21.

[8]Wilfred Pelletier, Two Articles (Neewin Publishing Co., 1969), p. 84.

the growth of articulate Indian leadership across Canada, Indian Affairs has developed a "new rhetoric proclaiming its commitment to helping Indians help themselves and the need to work themselves out of a job."[9] Such shifts of official policy toward Indians and the influences these shifts of policy have upon Indian organizations, suggest that an in-depth study of Indian Affairs - particularly from the aspect of its historical development - could be helpful toward gaining a more balanced view of Indian-white relationships. The historical development of Indian Affairs, studied in terms of its relationship with the emergence, growth, (or decline), of Indian organizations, could offer deeper insight into the underlying goals of white government (assimilation and adaptation of the Indians), serve to validate both Frideres' and Patterson's theories as ~~to~~ the causes of the subordinate - superordinate structure of Indian-white relationships, and illustrate the deeply-rooted influences of the colonial mentality.

Cardinal briefly reviews the historical development of Indian Affairs:

> The Indian Affairs Branch was originally created to administer the annuities and to implement the promises contained in Treaties negotiated on behalf of her Majesty the Queen and the Indian peoples of this country. They were to further protect our rights given to us as payment when our forefathers

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[9] Harold Cardinal, Speech at the Glendon Forum on Canadian Indians, York University, Toronto, October, 1968, CANSP Papers, Trent University Archives.

> surrendered title to this land. Over the years this role has been redefined - and naturally without consultation with our people - to the extent, whereby those who were hired by the government to protect our rights became oppressors instead of protectors.[10]

The main problems challenging the Indian Association during its formative years, closely related with the colonial administrative structure discussed previously, were both organizational and ideological in nature. From the organizational aspect, there were the tasks of building membership, improving communications, effecting unification across tribal boundaries, and establishing recognition of the Association. Ideologically, early leaders were faced by the challenge of devising a unifying philosophy for action which could begin to change the condition of wardship and dependency under which Indians lived. As this study's introduction has indicated, it was at this juncture that the Association, of necessity, became an educator among Alberta's Indians, a role which it continues to play up to the present. This is demonstrated by the fact that early organizational work, carried out on a voluntary basis, necessitated breaking down some conservative attitudes among older Indians and helping them to see the critical necessity for organization. In this sense, a process of conscientization was set in operation.

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[10] Ibid.

Cardinal writes:

> the provincial movements of that time were significant in that they gradually began to penetrate the isolation of Indian communities. They assisted and encouraged local people to begin looking beyond the boundaries of their own reserves and areas. Through this opening up, they began to discover common problems. This led naturally to cooperation in seeking solutions to their problems. The leaders from far-separated reserves were able to learn from each other.[11] (My emphasis).

Meanwhile, white colonial administration, (represented by the Indian agent), fearing the threat of developing Indian organizational strength, "actively worked against the leaders of the day."[12] Common to the colonial pattern of response to native resurgence, various Indian agents not only threatened punishment for Indians who persisted in organizational efforts, they also used more subtle weapons "such as delaying relief payments or rations."[13]

As the study has indicated, subsequent to the formation of the Indian Association in 1944, meetings began to develop in a more consistent pattern, issues became more clearly defined, and alternatives were presented more forcefully and effectively. Alberta Indians began to speak up for their rights, especially those concerned with their economic well-being - hunting, trapping, and fishing - and they united intertribally

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[11]Cardinal, The Unjust Society, pp. 99-100.

[12]Ibid., p. 98.

[13]Ibid.

in opposition to increasing attempts to infringe upon or restrict those rights. Significantly, with the increasing desire for economic improvement and development:

> leaders . . . grew increasingly concerned with the lack of educational opportunities for their children, for they knew that this was to be one of the crucial problems. In education lay the future of their people.[14] (My emphasis).

The situation of neglect in Indian schools, and the extreme limitation of opportunities available for advancement of Indian children into higher education, (investigated in Chapter IV of the study), soon gained the critical attention of the Indian Association during the early forties. Such concerns are reflected in the Association's 1945 Memorial, which stressed the inadequacies of the residential school system and called for the rapid extension of day school education - under the terms of the federal government's Treaty obligations to Alberta's Indians. As the study has demonstrated, the various church bodies were tiring of their financial burdens in Indian education and were exerting some pressure upon federal authorities to relieve this burden of operating costs. But this study would add that increasing pressures upon church expenditures, although not without importance, reflected but part of a general rearguard action on the part of missionary educators, who,

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[14] Ibid.

in the face of a rapidly changing postwar era (with increasing urbanization), were proving to be insufficiently equipped - particularly in the areas of educational method and curricula - to meet Indian needs and aspirations for change. Related to Patterson's catalogue of parallel experiences among colonial peoples, the days of missionary havens and indirect-rule theocracy were drawing to a rapid close.

Achievements of the Indian Association in the area of education can be measured by the fact that by the fifties, the government, for the first time, "took a serious look at its educational responsibilities."[15] In 1951, largely because of pressures from Indian leaders, the government made its first attempt to change the Indian Act. In 1953, James Gladstone, President of the Indian Association, summarizing the achievements of the Association stated:

> The time has come to show . . . . what our organization has done . . . social benefits, increased opportunities in education, 3 day schools have grown into 34 rooms and many are in white schools, high schools and university . . . . we have a full-time inspector of Indian schools . . . . all these things are yours because of the Indian Association.[16]

Thus, in addition to its role as an educator among Alberta's Indian population, the Association has acted as

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[15]Ibid., p. 101.

[16]Speech by James Gladstone, Annual General Meeting of the Indian Association, Saddle Lake, Alberta, June 24, 1953, O.M.I. Archives, Edmonton.

a primary influence toward effecting reform in Indian schools. But these schools, it should be remembered, have remained almost completely administered and staffed by non-Indians. In addition, curriculum content is determined by white society:

> In Federal schools the content of curriculum is usually that of the provincial schools system, and the provincial schools system is geared to the needs of the dominant white society. Very little about Indian people is taught in our schools, and what is taught has been very negative.[17]

Over recent years, mainly dating from the Association's reorganization during the late sixties, there have been increasing demands for alternative educational structures, planned and controlled by Indians, and firmly established upon an Indian cultural base. A major proposal to achieve Indian control has been the Association's Indian Education Centre Plan, presented to the Federal Cabinet in March, 1970. This plan was stressed again as an important segment of the Association's Red Paper - Citizens Plus, presented to the government in June of the same year.

The rationale underlying the Education Centre Plan stemmed from the crucial necessity of strengthening the Indian cultural base. This necessity, further outlined in the Red Paper[18] reflected increasing awareness of the

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[17]The Alberta Indian Education Centre, Indian Association Publication, IV-8.

[18]Many recommendations have been made by white

importance of the educational component within the Indian movement toward independence and self-government. Responses by white authorities toward the Education Centre Plan have been both significant and revealing. This suggests that an in-depth study of the Plan, covering its first inception, its governing rationale, its reception by federal authorities, its problems of funding and subsequent demise, could yield valuable data to illustrate the colonial relationship which has existed for so long between Indian and white cultures in western Canada. Such explorations lie beyond the scope of this study, yet it is important for this study's purpose to note that a significant relationship exists between the early Association's proposals for reform in Indian education, and its proposals for alternative Indian educational structures over recent years.

The early Association, pointed to the irrelevance of the "white man's curriculum," sought to expose the inadequacies of the residential school system, and called for a revision of the entire system of Indian education. Implementation of the latter could begin with the appointment of a "Commission of competent and practical educationists . . . to study the needs of the Indian

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investigators concerning solutions for Indian educational "problems," Yet they inevitably omit perhaps the most obvious recommendation from the Indian point of view . . . "that is . . . strengthening of the Indian cultural base." Citizens Plus, p. 85.

education system."[19] The extent to which Indians were to participate in such a Commission was not specified.

Over recent years, proposals for educational change by the Association are far more specific and stress total Indian involvement, not only in decision-making, but also in control of finances and programs. Cardinal states:

> We have continued to place before the government practical alternatives. In education we recommended that the local community be given the primary responsibility for handling educational monies and programs. We have not had much success in this area.[20]

Cardinal, again, presenting the Association's Red Paper to the Federal Cabinet in Ottawa, 1970, reflects the Indian conviction that only an Indian educational system - planned and controlled by Indians - can offer a viable alternative to the white-dominated system. He states:

> in the area of education, we are proposing that the available resources for this purpose be conveyed to the Indians, and not to some other Government's structure. With the necessary resources, Indians have demonstrated that they are capable of directing and developing educational programs that fill the special needs of their children. In Alberta, we have proposed the creation of an Alberta Education Center, conceived as a vehicle for developing Indian leadership and management skills which would prepare Indians to administer their own local governments and to benefit from the economic development of their

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[19]Indian Association Memorial, 1945, p. 10.

[20]Cardinal, Glendon Forum, October, 1968.

communities.[21]

Cardinal adds further that the Education Centre would also:

> conduct research into Indian education and the development of Indian curricula that would offer an alternative to the provincial educational program and help to reduce the present 94% drop-out at the Grade 12 level. It would also train teachers and develop techniques that would enable our elders to participate in the formal education of our young people by conveying our traditions and culture and making it possible for them to participate fully and proudly in both societies.[22]

The Government's response to the Association's concept of community and culturally-based education has been significant. This study has demonstrated that the Association, since its inception, has posed both a challenge and a threat to entrenched colonial patterns of authority which still influence the response of the larger white society toward Indian peoples' attempts to emancipate themselves. The demise of the Association's Education Centre Plan, a plan described by a leading government official as being "recognized by leading educators as the most penetrating assessment of the educational needs of native people . . . yet produced in this country,"[23]

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[21]Cardinal, making Red Paper presentation to Cabinet, Ottawa, June 4, 1970, Symons Papers, Trent University Archives.

[22]Ibid.

[23]Speech by Hugh Faulkner, Parliamentary Secretary to the Secretary of State, Annual General Meeting of the Indian Association, Saddle Lake, Alberta, 1972, O.M.I. Archives, Edmonton.

is discouraging. Even more discouraging for those who maintain faith in existing consultative structures for Indian and white, is the fact that there still exists a considerable lack of understanding by white bureaucratic authorities of Indian aspirations for self-determination, especially in the area of education.

Noting that it is very likely that the bureaucrats and politicians both in the provincial government and Ottawa "do not have a clear understanding" of what the Alberta Indian Education Centre is about, Slavik and Couture state:

> The Federal Government has a very poor understanding of the process of development required on reserves in order that they may take responsibility for their own affairs. Moreover, they do not understand the concept of culturally based education, regarding it with a great deal of scepticism. As a result their program of development for Indian people is based on a "program budgeting and planning system" (P.B.P.S.), rather than one based on a community development philosophy. From this perspective, they would like to see cultural/education centres engaged in projects with clearly specified objectives and with tangible results, rather than in what some cases are long and slow developmental programs. For example - classroom education rather than community education.[24]

The Centre not only initiated, researched and prepared the most thorough and comprehensive proposal for an Indian Cultural Education Center in Canada, but was "clearly the primary force behind educating and pressuring the

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[24] J. Slavik and J. Couture, "Issues Related to the Funding of the AIEC," in A Chronological History of the AIEC, Edmonton, March, 1973, 2-3.

Federal Government to recognize the need and merit of adopting a federal policy for Indian Cultural Education Centres."[25] Yet, despite this fact, and despite approval and endorsements by politicians and educators, "it has never received the sufficient or necessary funding to begin realizing its objectives."[26] The Centre finally notes that it has faced a "history of reluctant, discouraging, and at times discriminatory treatment from the Federal Government."[27]

In the area of economic development of Indian communities, this study has demonstrated that the Association has continuously stressed the essential relationship between this and educational programs. Of continuous concern for the Association's leadership has been the wide disparity which has existed, and continues to exist, between the aspirations and expectations of Indians and the opportunities available for realizing educational skills and training. Significantly, Harold Cardinal, in presenting the Association's Red Paper to the Federal Cabinet in 1970, stated:

> Related to educational achievement is the need for economic development of our communities. Without economic opportunity, our newly-learned skills would be meaningless.[28]

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[25]Ibid.

[26]Ibid.

[27]Ibid.

[28]Cardinal, Red Paper presentation, June 4, 1970.

Accordingly, the Association began a pattern for economic development for Indian communities in Alberta through AIDS (Alberta Indian Development System). AIDS, preparing programs upon request and operating as an autonomous body with its own board of directors, represents a far more sophisticated approach by the Association in the area of economic development. In contrast, the Association's 1945 Memorial presented a series of resolutions drawn from the various reserves, requesting economic aid, the protection of Indian hunting and fishing rights, and a halt to the encroachment of non-Indians on Indian land.[29] But it should be noted that basic economic concerns over a span of some 33 years remain essentially the same: underdevelopment, lack of financial aid and private investment, as well as lack of access to resources. Only the approach has changed.

Cardinal observed in 1970 that among Indians there was "more discontent . . . than in the past, and for a number of reasons."[30] He added further that the social and economic situation had not improved that much, "but the entire awareness of what is possible has vastly increased."[31]

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[29]Indian Association Memorial, 1945, pp. 12-18.

[30]Harold Cardinal in "Indians will Build a New Canada," Peterborough Examiner, June 24, 1970.

[31]Ibid.

This study suggests that this discrepancy between awareness of possibilities and the continuation of critical socio-economic situation (stemming from the colonial relationship), can only serve to prolong and increase a state of disillusionment and frustration among Alberta's Indians. Such a mood may become channelled into greater militancy among younger Indians. This poses problems for the Association for the future, particularly where unity is concerned. Unity is also threatened by white educational influences.

The alienating processes of the dominant educational ideology lead to division and separation, and since these forces monopolize the educational system through the agency of the state, they can subtly coerce minority groups and institutionalize educational alternatives. This coercion takes form as a total governing assumption, still largely unchallenged. T.S. Eliot has written that:

> Education in the modern sense implies a disintegrated society, in which it <u>has come to be assumed</u> that there must be <u>one measure of education</u> according to which everyone is educated simply more or less. Hence <u>Education</u> has become an abstraction.[32] (My emphasis).

Anthropologists Murray L. Wax and Rosalie H. Wax maintain that:

> Almost in spite of ourselves, we have been led to the conclusion that some of our most important general educational goals constitute ruthless

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[32]T.S. Eliot, <u>Notes Toward the Definition of Culture</u> (London: Faber & Faber, 1948), p. 27.

> attacks on the solidarity and self-respect of the ethnic and lower-class communities, and, indeed, on their very existence.[33]

Noting that the "Vacuum Ideology" is only one of the more recent tactical offenses, the Waxes discuss the goal of individualistic achievement, a particularly noticeable feature of mass education:

> The modern school system is premised on the notion that its population is an aggregate of social atoms, among whom there is no significant or permanent linkages. In the ideology of the educators, these social atoms begin at the same starting line and . . . move onward in haphazard clumps, each atom achieving independently of the others and according to its own inner strength and motives. What an individual does in school, and later, in his vocation, is an achievement - his individual achievement - deriving from his own initiative and effort, and of benefit only to himself and his immediate family. Contrary to this ideology is the normative system of a folk community that confronts an alien society. For in this system the individual may excel only when his excellence enhances the position of his breathren.[34]

No minority culture can escape the influences of this dominating educational ideology in Canada today, and the corollary for Indian people must be that their culture cannot survive in any identifiable way unless they gain control of their own educational systems.

As we have seen, the Association's first attempts to create an Indian educational structure firmly based upon Indian culture have been impeded, and, to a very

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[33]Murray L. Wax and Rosalie H. Wax, Anthropological Perspectives on Education (New York: Basic Books, 1971), p. 7.

[34]Ibid.

large extent, frustrated. A principal cause of this has been the control which government exerts over Indian organizations. But this blockage of Indian aspirations in no way lessens what Marvin Harris has termed "the evolving dynamic of a stressful situation."[35] On the contrary, such actions can "unwittingly contribute to the pan-Indianism movement as well as other social movements.[36]

This study has demonstrated that the characteristically colonial response of government to Indian resurgence in western Canada, far from halting its growth and development, has prompted the Indians to successfully utilize white organizational techniques which has ultimately benefited their people. Of perhaps even greater importance, Indian political, social, economic, and educational awareness has been heightened and sustained over a long period, and continues to the present.

Finally, it is stressed that the future of education for Indians in Alberta, cannot be disassociated from social and political changes and reorientations in the larger white society. Harris, discussing factors influencing the success of revitalization movements among aboriginal peoples, writes: "Much depends on the extent

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[35]Marvin Harris, Culture, Man, and Nature (New York: Thomas Crowell Co., 1971), p. 562.

[36]Frideres, p. 118.

to which the superordinate groups are prepared to cope with disruptive influence affecting their power and authority."[37] Hopefully, this study points to another factor: mutual understanding between Indian and white. As one Indian expresses this understanding: "I have no faith in the government system, but a lot of faith in the people."[38]

The Indian Association's Indian Education Centre Plan clearly demonstrates that such mutuality of understanding can be achieved. It also indicates the sincerity of the Indian response. However, the Plan's proposals visualize a radical departure from the institutionalized problem-solving techniques of the Albertan educational establishment. Viewed from this perspective, the Indian cooperative response challenges the rigidities of the non-Indian superordinate structure. At the same time, it raises critical questions concerning the effectiveness of this structure in the field of Indian education.

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[37]Harris, p. 562.

[38]Fred Favel in "Indians will Build a New Canada," Peterborough Examiner, June 24, 1970.

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APPENDIX A

THE INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA:

A CHRONOLOGY OF IMPORTANT DATES

1919	League of Indians of Western Canada formed.
1921 (summer)	Meeting at Battleford Agency, Thunderchild Reserve, Saskatchewan. Iroquois speaker Mr. J.B. Lofts present.
1922	Meeting at Hobbema, Lofts present.
1933 (summer)	Meeting at the home of J.B. Tootoosis, Cutknife, Saskatchewan. First widely attended meeting. Chipewyans of Cold Lake present for the first time.
1936	Tootoosis very active in Saskatchewan. Takes party of Indians to Ottawa.
1936/38	Beginnings of widening rift between Alberta and Saskatchewan Indians.
1937	League of Indians of Alberta formed. John Calihoo active. Beginnings of formal structure of the Indian Association of Alberta.
1939	First general meeting of Indian Association at Winterburn, Alberta. League of Indians of Alberta changes name to Indian Association of Alberta. Recommendations forwarded to Ottawa. Association refused recognition.
1941 (summer)	Well organized meeting at Chipewyan Reserve, Legoff, Alberta. Bands from Saddle Lake, Kehewin, Big Island, Frog Lake, Onion Lake, present.
1942	Large meeting of Indian groups at Long Lake. Reports that Calihoo organizing "in the west."
1943	Meeting of Indians at Frog Lake. Tootoosis gathering many followers in Saskatchewan and Manitoba.

1944 (summer)	FORMAL ORGANIZATION OF THE INDIAN ASSOCIATION OF ALBERTA. J. Calihoo, President. John Laurie, Secretary.
1945/7	Indian Association of Alberta Memorials to Government of Canada.
1946/7/8	Joint Parliamentary Commissions to investigate Indian concerns.
1951	First Revision of the Indian Act.
1957	Hobbema incident: attempts to disenfranchise Indians. Indian Association of Alberta organizes public support with legal advice. Wins case.
1958	Indian Affairs Provincial Conferences.
1959	Death of J. Laurie.
1965	National Indian Advisory Councils/All Chiefs Conferences.
1968/9	Indian Association of Alberta Reorganization.
1969	Federal funding of Indian Association of Alberta for first time.
1969	Federal Government White Paper.
1970	Indian Association of Alberta's Red Paper - Citizens Plus counters Government's White Paper.
1970	Alberta Indian Education Center Plan to government, formation of AIDS.
1975	Demise of AIEC.